

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Personal Data

Name: Chris Eldridge
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last)
Other name(s) under which transcripts, certificates, and former applications may be listed:
Other: Chris Eldridge
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last)
Email Address: appstate.eldridge@gmail.com

Postal Address

Permanent Address	Present Address
Number & Street: 485 WHITE RIVER DRIVE UNIT 30-I	Number & Street:
Apt. Number:	Apt. Number:
City: MYRTLE BEACH	City:
State/Province: SC	State/Province:
Zip/Postal Code: 29579	Zip/Postal Code:
Country: United States of America	Country:
Daytime Phone: (843) 3537491	Phone Number:
Home/Cell Phone: ()	

Employment Desired

Closed Vacancy Desired:	Date Last Submitted	Experience in Similar Positions
JobID: 480 Council Appointed: City Manager at City of Punta Gorda, Florida	3/27/2020	years

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Veterans Preference

* Are you claiming Veterans Preference?

NO

The state and its political subdivisions shall give preference in appointment and retention in positions of employment to:

**Disabled veterans who have served on active duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces, have received an honorable discharge, and have established the present existence of a service-connected disability that is compensable under public laws administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; OR

-

**Disabled veterans who are receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension by reason of public laws administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Department of Defense.

-

**The spouse of a person who has a total disability, permanent in nature, resulting from a service-connected disability and who, because of this disability, cannot qualify for employment; OR,

-

**The spouse of a person missing in action, captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power.

-

**A veteran who has served on active duty at least one day during a war-time period, and separated with an honorable discharge.

-

**The un-remarried widow or widower of a veteran who died of a service-connected disability.

-

**A veteran in receipt of any Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

-

Branch of Service

Date of Entry

Date of Discharge

Please upload a copy of the DD214 and any other documentation you received when you separated from service that substantiates your claim for Veterans Preference.

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Basic Information - All applicants

* Have you ever been employed with the City of Punta Gorda before?

NO

If Yes, give date(s) and position(s)

* Do you have any friends or relatives that work for the City of Punta Gorda?

NO

If Yes, state name(s), relationship(s), and department(s)

* Are you currently employed?

NO

* Are you currently on lay-off from employment and subject to re-call?

NO

* Are you eligible to work in this country? Proof of citizenship or immigration status will be required upon employment

YES

* Date available to begin work

04/13/2020

* Desired Salary Range?

advertised range

* Shift?

1 (Morning)

* Type of Employment?

Full Time

* If required, can you travel?

YES

* Are you currently under contract with another employer?

NO

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please name the employer.

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, when does the contract expire?

When may we contact your present employer?

Have you ever failed to be rehired, been asked to resign a position, resigned to avoid termination, or been involuntarily terminated (dismissed, not laid off) from employment?

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please explain.

* Do you have a valid Florida driver's license?

No

* Do you have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL)?

No

If you have a CDL, what class is it?

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Education

Please tell us about your educational background beginning with the most recent.

Highest Degree Attained: MA/MS/etc.

Colleges, Universities and Technical Schools Attended:

Name and location	Dates Attended: From - To	Major area of study	Degree	Date Conferred or Expected	Graduated
Appalachian State University	08/1989 05/1993	English	Bachelors	05/1993	Yes
Clemson University	01/1996 05/1999	Public Administration	Masters	05/1999	Yes

List honors, awards or distinctions you have earned:

Experience

Starting with your present or last job, please give your employment history for the last ten (10) years. Include any job-related military service assignments and volunteer activities. You may exclude organizations that indicate race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disabilities, or other protected status.

Current or Most Recent Position		Employer Contact Information			
Horry County County Administrator		PO Box 997 Conway, sc 29528 United States of America 8439155230			
Date From - Date To:	05/2012 - 04/2019	Full or Part Time:	Full	Last Annual Salary:	205,000
Reason(s) for Leaving:	Politics, new county council chairman				
May we contact this employer?	Yes				
Responsibilities and Accomplishments at this Position	Please see resume				

Previous Position Held		Employer Contact Information			
City of Georgetown Administrator		PO Box 939 Georgetown, SC 29442 United States of America 8435454001			
Date From - Date To:	05/2009 - 05/2010	Full or Part Time:	Full	Last Annual Salary:	105,000
Reason(s) for Leaving:	Accepted position with Horry County				
May we contact this employer?	Yes				
Responsibilities and Accomplishments at this Position	Please see resume				

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Experience Continued

Previous Position Held		Employer Contact Information			
City of Pickens Administrator		PO Box 217 Pickens, SC 29671 United States of America 843-898-8160			
Date From - Date To:	03/2002 - 04/2009	Full or Part Time:	Full	Last Annual Salary:	\$80,000
Reason(s) for Leaving:	Accepted position with city of Georgetown				
May we contact this employer?	Yes				
Responsibilities and Accomplishments at this Position	Please see resume.				

Language and Translation Skills

* Do you know any language other than English?

No

IF YOU INDICATED "YES" ABOVE, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR OVERALL PROFICIENCY BELOW FOR THE LANGUAGE SPECIFIED.

Definitions of proficiency:

- * Beginner Level: You are basically a student of the language and enjoy working with it. You cannot be depended on to apply this language reliably in a real world situation.
- * Business Level: You are experienced enough with the language to conduct business in it. You are able to engage a native speaker of this language without offending them. You are able to take instructions in this language and carry them out without error.
- * Fluent Level: You are fully versed in this language, speaking, reading and writing it as well as a native speaker. You can keep up with a fast-paced dialogue between two native speakers of this language.

SPANISH

FRENCH

CREOLE

OTHER

Specify which language(s) other than those above in which you are proficient at a Business Level or Fluent Level.

In order to qualify for language translation premium, an employee must be able to communicate at the Business or Fluent Level.

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Professional References

	Reference 1 of 5	Reference 2 of 5
Name:	Mark Lazarus	Tom Rice
Current Position:	Businessman	Congressman
Best Contact Number	843-446-5890	843-340-0056
Mailing Address:		
Email:	mlazarus@lazarusentertainment.com	htomrice@gmail.com
Relationship to Candidate:	Horry County Council Chairman	Horry County Council Chairman
Years Known:	7	8
	Reference 3 of 5	Reference 4 of 5
Name:	Dave DeCenzo	John Napier
Current Position:	Coastal Carolina University President	Federal Lobbyist
Best Contact Number	843-450-2700	703-209-7179
Mailing Address:		
Email:	president@coastal.edu	johnnapier@aol.com
Relationship to Candidate:	Working together on economic development	Horry County Lobbyist
Years Known:	8	8
	Reference 5 of 5	
Name:	Anna Berger	
Current Position:	SC Association of Counties Dir. of Operations	
Best Contact Number	803-422-2350	
Mailing Address:		
Email:	aberger@scac.sc	
Relationship to Candidate:	Professional	
Years Known:	20	

City Manager Supplemental Questionnaire

1. How would you describe the relationship between an elected City Council and their appointed City Manager (chief executive)? Describe your experience(s) in managing that relationship. If your experience does not reflect a direct superior/subordinate relationship with elected officials, please describe your perception of this dynamic, and how you would go about ensuring that the relationship is positive and successful.
 2. What is your experience with open records laws, or as is colloquially known in Florida as "Sunshine" law? If you are not from Florida, please describe the standard for open records in the state(s) where you have served, and any challenges you may have had in complying with such laws.
 3. Please describe your experience(s) in dealing with the following agencies, the circumstances that drove your involvement with them, and the level of success you achieved in working with them:
 - FEMA
 - State regulatory agencies (please identify)
 4. The City of Punta Gorda's current City Manager has been in place for approximately 15 years. His group of direct reports has been stable, and has been in place for a minimum of two years, with several having served ten or more years. Describe the challenges you foresee with taking the place of the retiring City Manager and how you will approach this process.
 5. Please evaluate the following leadership traits, and determine which is most important to you. Why did you choose that characteristic? Describe a situation from your past that may have led you to feel this way.
 - Strong management skills and ability to develop, lead, and nurture high performance and a professional atmosphere.
 - Excellent writing and communication skills (including interpersonal communication).
 - Highly collaborative, organized, and efficient. Strong work ethic and demonstrated conflict resolution skills.
 - Strategic thinker and planner, problem solver, and ability to lead the council and staff in ongoing strategic planning and implementation efforts.
 6. As a coastal community, the City of Punta Gorda has been exposed to natural disasters over the past fifteen years, resulting in catastrophic damage to buildings and infrastructure throughout the community. What is your experience with emergency preparedness and recovery? If you do not have a natural disaster to use as a point of reference, you may use an organizational, public safety, or political crisis with which you had to deal. Please describe the actions you took, before (if applicable), during, and after the emergency, and the level to which you were successful.
 7. The City of Punta Gorda is currently engaged in a citizen-driven initiative focused on defining what the community and its leadership want the City to be, over the next several years, in terms of character, culture, and livability. A term that frequently is a focal point in the conversation is "managed growth." Explain what this means to you. What is your experience with respect to citizen master planning efforts, and how did you "manage growth?" To what level do you think your efforts were successful?
- Please click on the link that follows to upload the file(s) containing your responses to the questions.

[Punta Gorda Questionnaire.docx](#)

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

City Manager Job Description

Click the following link and read the file.

* Are you a member of the ICMA?

Yes

If you are a member of the ICMA, do you hold the ICMA Credentialed Manager designation?

Yes

If you hold the ICMA Credentialed Manager designation, please upload the document(s) you received from the ICMA certifying that you are credentialed.

By clicking on the link below, I certify that I meet, or exceed all the minimum requirements as a candidate for this position. I also certify that all the information I have provided in this section is accurate and truthful.

X	Signed: Chris Eldridge Stamped: 3/27/2020 1:20:52 PM; 208.65.20.250; Applicant - #4170 - Chris Eldridge;
----------	--

Drug Free and Certification

The City's Drug-Free Workplace Policy is aimed at ensuring '0' tolerance to illegal drugs at all times and its alcohol-free policy to '0' tolerance under circumstances that affect or might affect the safety and well being of employees, citizens, and others, or the effective operation of City business.

Unless the law requires otherwise, the City will not hire an applicant who uses, possesses, sells, distributes or cultivates illegal controlled substances or has an alcohol-related problem that the City believes will or may adversely affect the efficient operation of City business. To the extent allowed by applicable law, the City, at its option, may require successful completion of one(1) or more drug screening tests as a condition of employment. Whenever applicants for employment are to be test for the presence of illegal controlled substances, they shall be informed of the test in advance and in writing.

By completing this application, the applicant certifies that he/she has received advance, written notification of testing for illegal, controlled substances.

I Certify that the answers given herein are true and complete. If I am employed, I understand that false or misleading information given in my application or interview(s) may result in discharge.

I understand, also, that I am required to abide by all rules and regulations of the City of Punta Gorda, and that my employment relationship with the City is 'at will,' which means that I may resign at any time and the City may discharge me at any time with or without cause. This 'at will' relationship may not be changed or modified for any reason unless specifically acknowledged in writing by an authorized executive of the organization.

I understand that this employment application becomes the sole property of the City of Punta Gorda, is a public record, and may be inspected by any member of the public for any reason.

Electronic Signature

X	Signed: Chris Eldridge Stamped: 3/27/2020 1:21:26 PM; 208.65.20.250; Applicant - #4170 - Chris Eldridge;
----------	--

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Release to Gather Credit Information

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF CREDIT/PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I, the undersigned, hereby authorize any and all financial institutions, credit bureaus, credit processing companies or other credit assembling entities to provide a consumer report and documentation of my current credit status to the City of Punta Gorda for employment purposes. I also authorize the City of Punta Gorda to conduct a background check through access to law enforcement databases, including the National Criminal Information Center (NCIC) and Florida Criminal Information Center (FCIC). Because this authorization is used for pre-employment purposes, I, the undersigned, also grant permission for criminal records (including felony and misdemeanor records), motor vehicle records, and employment records, including worker's compensation investigations, medical records, and education backgrounds to be released to the City of Punta Gorda.

I authorize this release of information solely for the purpose of obtaining employment with the City of Punta Gorda and may only be used within the context of this employment application. I understand that all information obtained by the City from this credit/personal background check will be held in confidence by the City of Punta Gorda. This information will not be released to any other persons or organizations without my express written permission to do so, unless otherwise specified or permitted by applicable ordinance, statute, or law.

* Print Name:

Chris Eldridge

* Present Street Address/Apt. No:

485 White River Drive

* City:

Myrtle Beach

* State:

SC

* Zip Code:

29579

Signature:

X	Signed: Chris Eldridge Stamped: 3/27/2020 1:22:22 PM; 208.65.20.250; Applicant - #4170 - Chris Eldridge;
----------	--

* Date:

03/27/2020

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Legal Disclosures

* Are you eligible to work in the United States?

Yes

Have you ever been convicted of a felony or other non-traffic related crime?

No

If yes, explain, giving dates:

Please Note: A conviction will not necessarily bar you from employment. Facts, such as date of occurrence and rehabilitation will be considered. This information will be used only for job-related purposes and only to the extent permitted by applicable law.

Equal Opportunity Employer

City of Punta Gorda is an Equal Opportunity Employer. City of Punta Gorda ensures equal employment opportunities regardless of race, creed, gender, color, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability, or any other legally protected status.

Are you able to perform all the essential job functions of the position(s) for which you are applying, with or without reasonable accommodation?

YES

If you answered "No" to the question above, please list any reasonable accommodations that may be necessary to enable your to perform the essential job functions:

Applicant's Acknowledgment and Agreement

I hereby certify that all of the facts and information listed on this employment application are true and complete. I understand that any false, incomplete or misleading information given by me on this application is sufficient cause for rejection of this application. I also understand and agree that any such false, incomplete, or misleading information discovered on this application at any time after I am employed by the City may result in dismissal.

I hereby authorize the City of Punta Gorda to investigate all statements contained in this application, to interview the references and previous employers listed in this application. I authorize the references and previous employers listed to give the City all facts, opinions, and evaluations concerning my previous employment and any other information they may have, personal or otherwise, and release all such parties from any liability which may allegedly arise from furnishing such information the City, including, but not limited to, any liability for defamation or invasion of privacy. If I am selected for employment, I understand that the selection will be conditioned upon satisfactory results of a background investigation.

I understand, also, that I am required to abide by all rules and regulations of the City of Punta Gorda, and that my employment relationship with the City is "at will," which means that I may resign at any time and the City may discharge me at any time with or without cause. This "at will" relationship may not be changed or modified for any reason unless specifically acknowledged in writing by an authorized executive of the organization.

I understand that this employment application becomes the sole property of the City of Punta Gorda; it is a public record, and may be inspected by any member of the public for any reason.

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

I, Chris Eldridge, agree to all of the terms above.

X	Signed: Chris Eldridge Stamped: 3/27/2020 1:22:53 PM; 208.65.20.250; Applicant - #4170 - Chris Eldridge;
----------	---

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

Referrals

How did you hear about employment with us?

Other: ICMA		
-------------	--	--

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

DIRECTOR and MANAGER SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

* Name of Company or Organization:	Horry County
* Address:	PO Box 997
* City:	Conway
* State:	SC
* Zip:	29528
* Job Title/Position Last Held:	County Administrator
* Highest Annual Salary:	\$205,000

To whom do/did you report. If it was not an individual, but a Board or Committee, please state the name of the Board or Committee, and how it was organized:

Horry County Council

* What was the largest budget you administered?	\$600 million
* Total number of paid employees:	2300

Describe the primary activities in which your organization was engaged, and the role of your work unit within the organization.

Full service county, including an international airport.

If you are currently employed by this organization, what is your reason for leaving? If you have already left this employer, why did you leave?

Politics and a state investigation based upon a confidential memo from the county attorney to myself and County Council. The investigation was of the incoming chairman and his business partner/campaign chairman. References can verify details.

Name of Company or Organization:	City of Georgetown
Address:	PO Box 939
City:	Georgetown
State:	SC
Zip:	29442
Job Title/Position Last Held:	City Administrator
Highest Annual Salary:	\$110,000

To whom do/did you report. If it was not an individual, but a Board or Committee, please state the name of the Board or Committee, and how it was organized:

City Council

What was the largest budget you administered?	\$40 million
Total number of paid employees:	200

Describe the primary activities in which your organization was engaged, and the role of your work unit within the organization.

Ran a full service municipality, including water, wastewater and electric utilities.

If you are currently employed by this organization, what is your reason for leaving? If you have already left this employer, why did you leave?

Left to take Horry County position.

City of Punta Gorda Online Application

Eldridge, Chris - AppNo: 4170

Date Submitted: 3/27/2020

DIRECTOR and MANAGER SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION continued

To add employers in your application submittal, please click on the following link and provide that information as an uploaded attachment. Please ensure that all information required above is provided in the uploaded file(s).



Please respond fully and completely to each of the questions below. Your responses must be included in the application packet you will submit online. There is an upload link at the end of this page. Submit your responses in Microsoft Word.

1. How would you describe the relationship between an elected City Council and their appointed City Manager (chief executive)? Describe your experience(s) in managing that relationship. If your experience does not reflect a direct superior/subordinate relationship with elected officials, please describe your perception of this dynamic, and how you would go about ensuring that the relationship is positive and successful.

The relationship must be one of openness and honesty. There can be no playing of favorites. It is the Council's role to set goals and objectives for the community and organization and the administrator's role is to accomplish those. I've always been careful to maintain a positive relationship with my council members. I know it is important to try to get things done as much as possible. Sometimes there are legitimate reasons why a council requested task cannot be completed. If so, those reasons need to be explained fully and openly. Councils look for recommendations and guidance from their manager. I have found it beneficial to always lay out recognizable positives and negatives with any plan of action. The better informed a council can be, the better the decision and the more understanding the public can have.

2. What is your experience with open records laws, or as is colloquially known in Florida as "Sunshine" law? If you are not from Florida, please describe the standard for open records in the state(s) where you have served, and any challenges you may have had in complying with such laws.

The State of South Carolina has a similar code with its SC Freedom of Information Act. In Horry County, I consolidated FOIA requests under a coordinator within the Public Information Office. Many requests were customary and a part of various departments' daily workload, but others required more attention and legal review. The coordinator was able to set up a flow that kept all of this efficient and confidential material protected (HIPPA, Attorney-Client Privileged, protecting a criminal investigation, etc.)

3. Please describe your experience(s) in dealing with the following agencies, the circumstances that drove your involvement with them, and the level of success you achieved in working with them:

- FEMA
- State regulatory agencies (please identify)

Most of my experience with FEMA was recent as Horry County recovered from several

Federal Disasters - An ice storm, Joaquin Flooding, Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Florence. I would describe each experience as successful. That success was made possible by regular training for departments. When I was hired, I knew that emergency response was of utmost importance. I made it clear to department heads that it would be a focus and full participation was the only option. And in a nod to practicality, I made sure training was accompanied by a good lunch. It always helps to have enthusiastic participants. The result was excellent documentation for each disaster. Everyone fell into their roles and responded. To assist in the recovery process on more complex FEMA claims, Horry County contracted with Hagerty to pursue those. With the assistance of our Congressional Delegation, this process worked very well.

The working relationship with state and federal agencies was excellent for each response. Representatives from Army Corps of Engineers, SC Highway Patrol, SC Department of Natural Resources, the National Weather Service, Chamber of Commerce, Santee Cooper Electric and local governments were present in the Horry County Emergency Operations Center throughout the event. It made coordination exceptional, with all feeling part of the same team.

In normal conditions, relationships with state and federal agencies were always fostered. It was one of mutual respect. Each had a job to do, with the goal of finding something that worked for both the agency and the community. I have had occasions where an issue couldn't be resolved easily, but I made sure to keep the disagreement from becoming personal. Organizational memory lasts within state and federal agencies. There's sound logic behind the phrase, "Choose your battles wisely."

4. The City of Punta Gorda's current City Manager has been in place for approximately 15 years. His group of direct reports has been stable, and has been in place for a minimum of two years, with several having served ten or more years. Describe the challenges you foresee with taking the place of the retiring City Manager and how you will approach this process.

I would welcome serving in a community with that level of stability. That says volumes about the Council and their sound governance. Organizational knowledge is helpful. I would learn as much as I could from the staff. I'm not one who pursues change simply for the sake of change. Even so, there are always opportunities for organizational improvement. And, I would imagine, many ideas for doing so already exist within staff members. Often times, a prior manager would acknowledge that those things need to be done, but other items were more pressing or the timing wasn't right. Beyond that, circumstances occur that push change and adaptation to the forefront - hurricanes, economic downturns, the current pandemic.

5. Please evaluate the following leadership traits, and determine which is most important to you. Why did you choose that characteristic? Describe a situation from your past that may have led you to feel this way.

- Strong management skills and ability to develop, lead, and nurture high performance and a professional atmosphere.

- Excellent writing and communication skills (including interpersonal communication).
- Highly collaborative, organized, and efficient. Strong work ethic and demonstrated conflict resolution skills.
- Strategic thinker and planner, problem solver, and ability to lead the council and staff in ongoing strategic planning and implementation efforts.

I would choose the first because I believe the others are building blocks to get to a high performance organization. I believe strongly in fostering leadership within an organization by providing training and educational opportunities, and allowing for exposure to project management and human resource decisions. I set up a formalized two-year leadership program at Horry County. Department heads identified those within their departments with the ability and eagerness to advance within the organization. The program taught budgeting, hiring/firing, motivation, project management, procurement and other skills. By bringing representatives together from various departments, it gave them a better understanding of the organization as a whole. I always enjoyed meeting with the group. Their enthusiasm fed my own and gave me insight to their perception of Council actions and my recommendations.

6. As a coastal community, the City of Punta Gorda has been exposed to natural disasters over the past fifteen years, resulting in catastrophic damage to buildings and infrastructure throughout the community. What is your experience with emergency preparedness and recovery? If you do not have a natural disaster to use as a point of reference, you may use an organizational, public safety, or political crisis with which you had to deal. Please describe the actions you took, before (if applicable), during, and after the emergency, and the level to which you were successful.

Horry County seemed to have a disaster a year. Hurricanes, flooding and an ice storm dominated my tenure. Shortly after each initial event, we began talking about recovery. With disaster response, it's important to always be planning a step or two ahead of the response. Of course, this can't slow the active response. As a tourist destination, it was important to get the economy back up as quickly as possible. Keeping the chamber and municipal governments at the table for this decision making ensured everyone was on the same page. Messaging to the public was kept consistent in this way. This togetherness was fostered continually - outside of disasters. I set up a rotating luncheon six times a year that was attended by all local government managers, school superintendent, water utility CEO and occasionally, others. Establishing and maintaining those relationships PRIOR to the disaster is crucial.

7. The City of Punta Gorda is currently engaged in a citizen-driven initiative focused on defining what the community and its leadership want the City to be, over the next several years, in terms of character, culture, and livability. A term that frequently is a focal point in the

conversation is “managed growth.” Explain what this means to you. What is your experience with respect to citizen master planning efforts, and how did you “manage growth?” To what level do you think your efforts were successful?

Horry County was one of the fastest growing MSA’s each of the last few years. I don’t believe the growth was managed well. County Council was very much “pro growth.” Some of that attitude was fed by the pain of no growth after the financial meltdown. Managing growth on a county level is more difficult than for a municipality. Simplistically, “managed growth” would not create complaints from residents and would be welcomed. What that looks like depends on the community. I believe controls on mass grading, tree protection, lot size and setbacks can add to quality. Developers care about the cash they make today. The community must focus on years down the road. What are the new neighborhoods going to look like 20-30 years from now? Will they be attractive to new buyers? Are the building materials of the quality that they will last? It is also possible for a community to become reliant on growth - financially. Despite warnings to not do so, Horry County Council budgeted recurring expenses based upon one time revenue from building permit and planning fees. When that growth goes away, likely in already-tough economic times, the budgetary impact will be magnified (as is likely from the current pandemic).

Add a File

Punta Gorda Mayor and Council

March 27, 2020

Thank you for considering me for your City Manager position. I believe my experience would be of great value to you and your community. I have spent the last 10 years managing local governments on South Carolina's coast - first with the City of Georgetown and most recently, Horry County. Both jobs gave me valuable exposure to the unique challenges faced by coastal communities. Among those challenges were emergency management response, rapid residential growth, tourism management and workforce development.

I enjoy working on projects and seeing them through, as well as seeking continuous organizational improvement. I enjoy being challenged and supporting employees in their pursuit of exceptional public service.

I believe there are parallels between Punta Gorda and Horry County's when it comes to population growth and tourism. But, Punta Gorda is a unique community. I would welcome learning all of those unique characteristics. It's another part of this profession I enjoy. Diving into the history and nuances of communities. I love to learn.

I hope I have been able to convey my excitement at the opportunity of working for you in your efforts to ensure a strong, ethical, efficient and dynamic organization that serves the citizens of Punta Gorda. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss the position further. And, again, thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Eldridge

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**
Sent By: cbuckles

Completed By: Reference - Tom Rice

Sent On: 4/17/2020 11:45am CT
Completed: 4/17/2020 9:13pm CT

Chris Eldridge is an applicant for the City Manager position with the City of Punta Gorda, Florida. The information that you provide will help us make the decision for this critical position. Thank you for your time and input.

What was the nature of your relationship with the applicant?

I was County Chairman. He was administrator.

How long have you known the applicant?

9 years

Was your relationship with the candidate such that you can objectively evaluate the characteristics listed in the following list? If the answer is 'NO'; ignore the list. If you are uncertain or uncomfortable rating a specific element, simply choose N/A.

Yes

Please Rate the Candidate in the following qualities

1. Professional Judgement

5 (High)

Comments

Chris always impressed me with his mature and thoughtful judgement. He is knowledgeable and experienced. He was always prepared.

2. Professional Attitude

5 (High)

Comments

Chris did not complain. He set about his tasks with vigor. He worked hard to excel individually, and to make our organization, and Horry County excel as well.

3. Cooperation

5 (High)

Comments

4. Emotional Composure

5 (High)

Comments

Mature, reasonable, thoughtful. Not dramatic.

5. Time Management

5 (High)

Comments

6. Knowledge in Field of Work

5 (High)

Comments

Excellent. Experienced and knowledgeable.

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**
Sent By: cbuckles

Completed By: Reference - Tom Rice

Sent On: 4/17/2020 11:45am CT
Completed: 4/17/2020 9:13pm CT

7. Planning and Preparation

5 (High)

Comments

He worked hard, and was always prepared.

8. Problem-Solving

5 (High)

Comments

As the chief administrator of a county government with nearly 2000 employees, and a population over 300,000 he had to be an excellent problem solver.

9. Initiative/Personal Motivation

5 (Strong)

Comments

10. Interpersonal Relations

5 (Great)

Comments

11. Communication skills

5 (Strong)

Comments

12. Stress Tolerance

5 (Strong)

Comments

His job obviously created a high level of stress. He handled it very well I never saw him over whelmed. I Never saw him react emotionally. He did his job well.

Do you know of any reason why the applicant should not be employed as the City Manager at the City of Punta Gorda?

No

If you answered "YES" please explain why.

Can you think of anyone else who would be important to contact before making an employment decision regarding this applicant?

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**
Sent By: cbuckles

Completed By: Reference - Tom Rice

Sent On: 4/17/2020 11:45am CT
Completed: 4/17/2020 9:13pm CT

If you have further comments you would like the City of Punta Gorda to consider in making its decision, please make use of the text box below.

He would still be in his job at Horry County, but he saw unethical behavior and reported it. He reacted as he should have. If I could hire him again, I would do so.

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**
Sent By: cbuckles

Completed By: Reference - Mark Lazarus

Sent On: 4/17/2020 11:43am CT
Completed: 4/18/2020 9:08am CT

Chris Eldridge is an applicant for the City Manager position with the City of Punta Gorda, Florida. The information that you provide will help us make the decision for this critical position. Thank you for your time and input.

What was the nature of your relationship with the applicant?

i was chairman of Horry county council where he was administrator

How long have you known the applicant?

7 years

Was your relationship with the candidate such that you can objectively evaluate the characteristics listed in the following list? If the answer is 'NO'; ignore the list. If you are uncertain or uncomfortable rating a specific element, simply choose N/A.

Yes

Please Rate the Candidate in the following qualities

1. Professional Judgement

5 (High)

Comments

always professional. sound judgement

2. Professional Attitude

5 (High)

Comments

carried himself well

3. Cooperation

5 (High)

Comments

worked well with everyone. he would always have documentation or valid reasoning for decisions.

4. Emotional Composure

5 (High)

Comments

stayed composed even in tough discussions

5. Time Management

5 (High)

Comments

always set priorities. managed time well.

6. Knowledge in Field of Work

5 (High)

Comments

understands all aspects of government

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**

Completed By: Reference - Mark Lazarus

Sent On: 4/17/2020 11:43am CT

Sent By: cbuckles

Completed: 4/18/2020 9:08am CT

7. Planning and Preparation

5 (High)

Comments

always prepared for meeting.

8. Problem-Solving

5 (High)

Comments

thinks out of the box when needed. understands how to reach out for help when needed.

9. Initiative/Personal Motivation

5 (Strong)

Comments

self starter

10. Interpersonal Relations

5 (Great)

Comments

had a staff of 2200 plus 11 council members and a chairman.

11. Communication skills

5 (Strong)

Comments

same as above. Had to communicate well to stay on top of issues.

12. Stress Tolerance

5 (Strong)

Comments

Do you know of any reason why the applicant should not be employed as the City Manager at the City of Punta Gorda?

No

If you answered "YES" please explain why.

Can you think of anyone else who would be important to contact before making an employment decision regarding this applicant?

John Napier

If you have further comments you would like the City of Punta Gorda to consider in making its decision, please make use of the text box below.

Chris would be a tremendous asset to your community.

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**
Sent By: cbuckles

Completed By: Reference - Anna Berger

Sent On: 4/6/2020 11:53am CT
Completed: 4/12/2020 3:21pm CT

Chris Eldridge is an applicant for the City Manager position with the City of Punta Gorda, Florida. The information that you provide will help us make the decision for this critical position. Thank you for your time and input.

What was the nature of your relationship with the applicant?

professional colleague

How long have you known the applicant?

20 years

Was your relationship with the candidate such that you can objectively evaluate the characteristics listed in the following list? If the answer is 'NO'; ignore the list. If you are uncertain or uncomfortable rating a specific element, simply choose N/A.

Yes

Please Rate the Candidate in the following qualities

1. Professional Judgement

5 (High)

Comments

2. Professional Attitude

5 (High)

Comments

3. Cooperation

5 (High)

Comments

4. Emotional Composure

5 (High)

Comments

5. Time Management

5 (High)

Comments

6. Knowledge in Field of Work

5 (High)

Comments

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**
Sent By: cbuckles

Completed By: Reference - Anna Berger

Sent On: 4/6/2020 11:53am CT
Completed: 4/12/2020 3:21pm CT

7. Planning and Preparation

5 (High)

Comments

8. Problem-Solving

5 (High)

Comments

9. Initiative/Personal Motivation

5 (Strong)

Comments

10. Interpersonal Relations

5 (Great)

Comments

11. Communication skills

5 (Strong)

Comments

12. Stress Tolerance

5 (Strong)

Comments

Do you know of any reason why the applicant should not be employed as the City Manager at the City of Punta Gorda?

No

If you answered "YES" please explain why.

Can you think of anyone else who would be important to contact before making an employment decision regarding this applicant?

If you have further comments you would like the City of Punta Gorda to consider in making its decision, please make use of the text box below.

Chris fully commits to his community and works tirelessly with local leaders and staff to achieve the vision. He is held in high regard by his peers as a local government manager who has integrity and strives to help his local leaders and staff members create an ethical culture. His experience in large and small municipal and county governments and working with various elected officials is a tremendous

City Manager Reference Survey

For: **Eldridge, Chris**

Completed By: Reference - Anna Berger

Sent On: 4/6/2020 11:53am CT

Sent By: cbuckles

Completed: 4/12/2020 3:21pm CT

If you have further comments you would like the City of Punta Gorda to consider in making its decision, please make use of the text box below.

asset.