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Is this related to a legislative agenda item?

Yes

No

Agenda item number (if known)**Subject***

City Administrator Ordinance

Message*

Good afternoon,

I do not reside in the City of La Crosse, so I understand my message may have limited relevance to your upcoming review of the ordinances creating a city administrator position. I am writing simply to express my personal support for professional administrator positions in cities, villages, and towns. I am not speaking on behalf of the Village of West Salem or the Village Board of Trustees. I simply wish to offer a different perspective for your consideration.

You are undoubtedly aware of the basic eligibility requirements to run for mayor—or any elected municipal office. A candidate must:

- Be a qualified elector
- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be a resident of the municipality
- Not have been convicted of a felony without a pardon

That's it. That is the full extent of the qualifications. There is no requirement for experience in municipal finance, long range planning, public administration, human resources, public works, infrastructure, or community and economic development. In the absence of a professional administrator, city staff must not only keep operations running but also train a new mayor—potentially every two years—on the fundamentals of municipal management.

A city administrator provides continuity, day to day oversight, coordinated operations, and a clear line of accountability. Municipalities with administrators are consistently noted by businesses and developers for their efficiency, communication, and predictable processes.

Speaking only for myself, my most productive working relationships are with fellow administrators, department heads, employees, and clerks throughout our region. Those are the individuals who manage operations, solve problems, and collaborate across municipal boundaries. The City of La Crosse is missing this key component of stable, efficient, and forward looking local government.

Hiring a qualified and experienced city administrator would make La Crosse more competitive, more responsive, and better positioned for long term success. It would also allow the mayor to focus on community engagement—attending events, meeting residents, understanding neighborhood issues, and building relationships with businesses, nonprofits, and civic groups—rather than being pulled into the daily operational demands of city management.

Thank you for taking your time to read this message.

Attachments (optional)