

4/30/2025

City Administrator Position

Employee view

Good morning,

As an employee of the City of La Crosse, I would like my view to be read and considered when the decision is made whether to move forward with the City Administrator position.

I have been with the City of La Crosse, beginning in a temp role in 2014 and transitioning to a full-time hire in 2016, and see many reasons why this position would be a benefit to the City residents and employees.

I do want to state that I am not a City of La Crosse taxpayer as I live outside City limits, however, I did grow up on the Northside of La Crosse and my family still resides within City limits.

I believe the position should be added specifically to hold Department Heads accountable for their actions and decisions. It puzzles me as to why they are not held to a specific standard already. Sure, are they supposed to be? Yes. But are they? Absolutely not.

When I hear Department Heads telling their Superintendents and Managers that they can do “whatever they want with their budget”, it infuriates me. It is not the department’s budget to do whatever they want to do; it is the taxpayers’ budget, and the City is responsible for ensuring the money is used wisely with the money being spent directly benefiting those that pay into it.

A question I have is when can Departments go ahead with projects within their department that are to “benefit” the employees, with funds used from utility bills or taxpayer funds, without approval or support from the Human Resources Director? Or approval from the taxpayers themselves? Or the City Council? A City Administrator would be able to review these items and approve them as they see fit.

Frivolous spending on the Department Heads part is why the City of La Crosse is always looking to make cuts. The money is not ours. It is not theirs. It is the taxpayer’s money.

Employees are consistently told from their superiors that their “hands are tied” when inquiring for higher pay or a reclassification in their position. However, behind closed doors and slid through to the Council for approval, they are reclassifying their own positions, receiving higher pay and taking more money from taxpayers while at the same time delegating more and more of their work out to the people they manage. “Low-level” employees should have the same considerations as management when they try to “better” themselves. A City Administrator would be able to oversee these reclassifications without bias.

The City Council approves based on Department Heads and Management recommendations. They do not ask for employee input. And if they do, employees are not made aware of that. Again, a City Administrator would be able to oversee these recommendations without bias.

One last comment, if the City Administrator position is to be adopted, the position should be hired from outside of the current employment pool. If the City were to hire from within, there would be no change. The “good ole boys” club would continue. The same people would be making the same detrimental decisions, just being paid more and having more power.

An outside perspective is exactly what the City of La Crosse needs. It is obvious to me that how we are doing business now, is not working, on the employee front or for the residents.

I very much enjoy my position with the City of La Crosse and am one of the few that welcome change. I believe that a City Administrator would not only benefit the residents but the employees as well.

Thank you for your time.

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