

Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont



Miro Weinberger
Mayor
Room 34, City Hall
Burlington, VT 05401
Tel: (802) 865-7272

MEMORANDUM

To: City Councilors
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger 
Date: October 3, 2012
Re: Appointment of Director of Department of Parks and Recreation

I respectfully submit for your consideration and approval Jesse Bridges as the next Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation. I am requesting City Council approval of this appointment at your October 15, 2012 meeting.

Jesse has emerged as the top candidate after a thorough process that included:

- Advertising nationally for the position, including targeting of diverse communities and supplemental recruitment efforts by my office;
- Review of resumes and initial interviews by a five-person search team led by Assistant to the Mayor Carina Driscoll, and including Councilor Dave Hartnett and Parks and Recreation Commissioners Carolyn Hanson, John Bossange, and John Ewing. This team reviewed resumes, conducted interviews and ultimately advanced six finalist candidates for my consideration;
- Four separate Parks and Recreation department meetings where I solicited input regarding the director position and the future needs of the department from nearly every full-time Parks and Recreation employee;
- Finalist interviews with a group of stakeholders that included representative employees and community partners.

Jesse is an excellent candidate for this position for numerous reasons, including his:

- **Experience on the leadership team of the University of Vermont Athletics Department and Foundation.** Jesse has served in a number of UVM roles that have given him broad management experience in budget development and management,

fundraising and revenue generation, and strategic planning. I encourage you to read the attached thoughtful July 27, 2012 letter from Jesse to me where he expands on this.

- **Track record of rising to each new professional challenge before him.** Jesse has succeeded in a broad array of UVM roles since 1998. He has steadily taken on increasing responsibility in his time at UVM, creating new challenges for himself and finding success in those challenges. He has won multiple staff awards from UVM and will come to the City with very high recommendations from senior administrators at the University.
- **Commitment to Public Service and Community.** I am impressed that Jesse attained a Master of Public Administration from UVM in 2008 while also working full time, and that this academic work resulted in induction into the International Honor Society for Public Administration (in addition to his numerous prior academic honors). Also, while at UVM, Jesse participated in Leadership Champlain. After completing the program he became a member of the Leadership Champlain Board and helped plan the Government and Politics, and the Cultural Competency days that are part of the Leadership Champlain training.
- **Fundraising and Revenue Generation.** Much of Jesse's focus at UVM has been on revenue generation, and in recent years, fundraising. Jesse has achieved considerable success generating revenues and gifts and this experience will be invaluable for a department that is responsible for generating much of its revenue internally, and is seeking to create a new foundation as an additional supplement to revenues.
- **Commitment to Athletics, Recreation and Burlington.** After graduating from the University of Vermont, Jesse committed his working life to the UVM Athletics Department for the next ten years. His roles at UVM were focused on high-level varsity athletics, but also involved planning and leadership duties related to club and intramural recreation. At UVM he has built on his passion for the role of athletics in our lives and in our community, and he wants to bring that passion to our Burlington Parks and Recreation Department and our community.

Further details of Jesse's background can be found in his attached letter and resume.

If confirmed, Jesse plans to begin his work for the City on Monday, October 22. While Mari Steinbach's last day in the office will be this Friday, October 5, she has agreed to be available to the new director during the early weeks of new leadership. I am grateful to Mari for her continued service to Burlington through this transition period.

Thank you for your consideration of Jesse Bridges as the next Burlington Director of Parks and Recreation.

Jesse L. Bridges
27 Poirier Place, Burlington, VT 05408 (802) 233-2794
Jesse.Lee.Bridges@gmail.com

July 27, 2012

Mayor Miro Weinberger
City of Burlington
179 South Winooski Ave
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Mayor Weinberger,

Please accept my application for Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Burlington. With over ten years of progressive responsibility in multiple avenues of administration and a substantial background in organized physical activity, I believe I am uniquely positioned to lead this department into the future. With an extensive network and a positive reputation within the Burlington community, I would bring the ability to engage constituents of all ages in the experience and decision making process surrounding the direction of our community spaces and activities.

Budget Development and Management

As a member of the University of Vermont's Budget, Finance and Investment Committee and the Athletic Department's Budget and Finance Sub-Committee, I have managed multiple budgets and participated in the development of budgets at differing levels of complexity from university wide down to individual programs. In addition, each year I have participated in multiple audits, both internal and external, of revenues and business processes giving me a detailed understanding and appreciation for how the budget can manage and inform our operations. The budget is not only a means for managing finances, it is the fundamental driver of strategic policy development. We have a responsibility to make sure that money spent on Parks and Recreation is not only done with the public's input but also with the public's trust. A transparent and zero based budgeting process would accomplish this goal.

Fundraising and Revenue Generation

Since I started at the University of Vermont in 2002, the Athletic Department has seen increased revenues and decreased operating expenses in all administrative units. My skills, in this area, focus on philanthropic fundraising, outbound sales, and revenue forecasting. With much of the Parks and Recreation funding coming from internally generated revenues the next Director needs to be able to focus on improving those areas to limit any burden on the general fund. Through thoughtful partnerships with private corporations, individuals, and local/state entities we can continue to develop a Parks and Recreation system of envy around the country. We can do more with the focus

on private philanthropy and, as the Director, I would take charge of the efforts surrounding the new Parks Foundation. Just think of the publicity when Burlington hosts the X Games on the waterfront at the new Burton Skate Park.

Strategic Planning and Leadership

Over the past ten years I have been part of multiple long term strategic planning processes. Through the development of core values, strong mission/vision and both short term and long term goals the Athletic Department, University and Foundation have moved to new heights. This process has been led at senior management level but has been driven by the decisions and goals of the employees. I would bring this collaborative leadership style to the Department. Parks and Recreation has many outstanding staff, teachers and professionals who, when engaged in the process of setting the future course, would be exponentially more productive and have a higher personal satisfaction with their work. I encourage independent decision making not only with my direct reports but through the work of others across the organization and outside with volunteers.

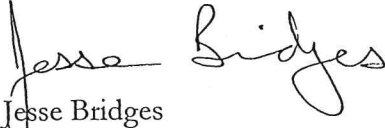
Recreation

Through years of experience as an athlete and as part of a campus athletic program, I have developed a love and appreciation for the role of physical activity in our lives. As a Burlington resident I regularly use the Burlington parks, bike path and beaches with my family. My knowledge of our community's passion for recreation and the outdoors will be important in understanding the way these spaces and activities play in the lives of our citizenry.

The development of our Parks and Recreation system is paramount to the long term health of our community from a physical activity, financial and environmental perspective. My background and passion will help me to partner with many in the growth of Burlington's extensive and beautiful parks and recreation system.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to speaking with you further.

Sincerely,


Jesse Bridges

Jesse L. Bridges
27 Poirier Place, Burlington, VT 05408 (802) 233-2794
Jesse.Lee.Bridges@gmail.com

EDUCATION:

University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont

- Master of Public Administration, May 2008
- Bachelor of Arts in History, Minor in Human Geography, May 2002

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

The University of Vermont Foundation

April 2012 to Present

Associate Director of Major Gifts – Athletics

Director of the UVM Victory Club

- Transitioned employment to UVM Foundation to increase focus on departmental fundraising efforts.
- Advise Athletic Director, Senior Associate Athletic Director, and COO of the Foundation on multiple facets of athletic business operations and our community.
- Increased job function to manage donor pool of 140 major gift prospects.
- Job transition includes continued oversight and management of the Victory Club operation and Ticket Operations described below.
- Continued to serve as a Assistant Athletic Director and member of the senior staff Policy and Planning Committee.

University of Vermont

July 2010 to May 2012

Assistant Athletic Director, External Relations

- Promoted in July of 2010 to senior staff Policy and Planning Committee.
- Assist in the coordination of the department's overall budget on the Athletic Department's Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.
- Developed a department revenue matrix to better equate operating budget expenses and revenue.
- Elected as a staff representative to the University Board of Trustees Budget, Finance and Investment Committee which monitors the budget and budget policy for the entire University.
- Continued to supervise and oversee Victory Club and Ticket Operations and all associated duties.

University of Vermont

July 2007 – July 2010

Director of Victory Club and Ticket Operations

- Created new position to further develop and coordinate donor and fundraising activities while saving the department salary by unifying two positions.
- Responsible for forecasting ticket and fundraising revenue to assist with budget development.
- Oversaw revenue generation and operations for annual fund donations and ticket sales in excess of \$2,400,000.
- Supervised Victory Club Assistant, Assistant Ticket Managers (2).
- Developed and oversaw the operating budgets for the Athletic Ticket Office and Victory Club.
- Developed a Victory Club Advisory Council of 10-14 volunteers to assist with strategic planning, outreach and peer to peer fundraising efforts.

- Managed relationships across University and Community functionally and cross-functionally to advance the mission of the Athletic Dept. and University.
- Coordinated and managed donor cultivation and stewardship activities.
- Created unique solicitation and outreach plans to engage multiple constituencies.
- Changed position to include all aspects of development and event management from operations to marketing.
- Hired, trained and managed part-time employees and college students for Ticket Office duties. Supervised Box Office Manager who staff and prepare for events.
- Chair of Technology Committee which oversaw planning and budget allocation for all departmental technology.

University of Vermont

July 2003 – June 2007

Director of Ticket Operations

- Responsible for the initial implementation of a multiple new policies and procedures.
- Incorporated new technologies to advance the operation.
- Implemented a fee schedule and business plan to incorporate ticketing for all University events, founding the UVM Central Ticket Office.
- Oversaw handling of all monies from ticket sales including deposits and financial reconciliation.
- Modernized, improved and managed season ticket contracts and assignments for Hockey and Basketball, oversaw an extensive wait list (20 years+) for hockey season tickets.
- Worked with Marketing Director and Development/Alumni Relations to coordinate promotional events with appropriate ticket distribution to boost sales, attendance, fan and alumni experience.

University of Vermont

Aug. 2002 – June 2003

Interim Ticket Manager

- Managed ticket sales for all ticketed sports.
- Changed position to include all aspects of event management.

Champlain College

Aug. 2005 – May 2007

Head Resident

- Responsible for 43 residential students' health, safety and general well being.
- Oversaw programming for residential students including community service.
- Supervised the Resident Assistant.

University of Vermont Field Hockey Team Sept. 1998-May 2002

Assistant Coach

- Assisted in the coaching and day to day running of a Division 1 program.
- Helped to organize practices, trips, training and recruiting.
- Worked as a liaison between team and coaching staff.
- Coached and staff summer camps throughout the east coast.

US Field Hockey Futures Program Region 1

Sept. 1999 – April 2002

Regional Goalkeeping Consultant

- Coordinated coaching and selecting for goalkeepers in VT, NH and ME.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Leadership Champlain Board of Directors

Sept. 2011 – Present

- Working board that puts together the curriculum for the Chamber of Commerce Leadership program.

- Assisted in the development of days on Government/Politics, Education and Community Leadership.
- Helped rejuvenate the alumni outreach and networking through additional event and program planning.

**Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce
Leadership Champlain**

Sept. 2010 - June 2011

- Yearlong program focusing on gaining insight into our community's issues in a unique way: through active learning, team-based learning, networking and exposure to community leaders.

United States Junior National Men's Field Hockey Team

December 1997-January 2000

- Played as a goalkeeper for the team in practice and International Competition.

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Department of Athletics Charlie Zabriskie Staff Award, 2004, 2005 and 2007

Pi Alpha Alpha, International Honor Society in Public Administration, Inducted Spring of 2008.

Golden Key Honor Society, International Honor Society, Inducted Fall of 2007.

Gamma Theta Upsilon, International Honor Society in Geography, Inducted Spring of 2001, elected Secretary/Treasurer Fall of 2001

Phi Alpha Theta, International Honor Society in History, Inducted Spring of 2002

COMPUTER SKILLS:

CS Advance Donor Relations, Peoplesoft Financials and Human Resources, ProVenue Max Ticketing, R25 Scheduling, Microsoft Office, PowerPoint, Basic Adobe Photoshop, Quark.