



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Mike Kanarick
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Mayor Miro Weinberger Appoints Bob Rusten as New Chief Administrative Officer

Burlington, VT – Mayor Miro Weinberger today announced the appointment of Bob Rusten as the new, permanent Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Burlington. Rusten, who has 17 years of municipal and state government experience, currently serves as the Deputy City Manager, Chief Financial Officer, and City Treasurer of the City of South Burlington, Vermont. Weinberger has asked the City Council to approve the appointment at its May 6, 2013 meeting.

“Bob’s extensive experience working in municipal and state government, his record of turning around city finances and leading labor negotiations, and his strong communication and consensus-building skills will make him a great Burlington CAO,” said Weinberger.

During his years of municipal and state government work, Rusten successfully has led financial turnarounds in both South Burlington and Wilmington, Vermont. Additionally, Rusten has valuable experience with pension reform and collective bargaining, having sat at both ends of the collective bargaining table, leading union negotiations on behalf of municipalities and serving as a steelworkers union officer participating in union negotiations on behalf of the union.

“I am very excited about building upon the excellent work of Paul Sisson and the entire team in the CAO’s Office, the Mayor, the City Council, and all the City employees to resolve long-standing financial issues,” said Rusten. “With those issues resolved and a sound financial footing from which to work, the Mayor and Council can feel more confident in focusing on the future of Burlington.”

Please see attached documents, including:

- *Memorandum from Mayor Miro Weinberger to City Councilors requesting approval of the appointment of Bob Rusten as Chief Administrative Officer*
- *Robert “Bob” Rusten resume*

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Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

To: City Councilors
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger
Date: May 1, 2013
Re: Appointment of Chief Administrative Officer

I respectfully submit for your consideration and approval Bob Rusten as the next Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for the City of Burlington. I am requesting City Council approval of this appointment at your May 6, 2013 meeting.

Bob is exceptionally qualified for the CAO position and will bring exactly the skills, experiences, and character to the office that Burlington needs right now.

Bob has 17 years of experience in municipal and state government.

- For the past 2 and 1/2 years, Bob has served as the Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer, and for the last year as City Treasurer of neighboring South Burlington.
- For 4+ years, Bob served as the Town Manager of Wilmington, Vermont. While in Wilmington, Bob lowered the town tax rate three years in a row while investing in town infrastructure and growth. Bob helped create and lead the "Tri-Town Economic Development Committee" – three towns working together to create and implement economic development strategy.
- In 1996, Bob successfully ran for the Vermont State House, getting elected as the Representative from Halifax. Bob won re-election four times, opting not to run for re-election in 2006 after 10 years of service as a State Representative. While in the Legislature, Bob served on the Ways and Means Committee from 2001-06, serving as the Vice Chair and Ranking Member, and on the Governmental Operations Committee from 1997-2000.
- For 15 years (the last 10 overlapping with his time in the Legislature), Bob had his own management consulting company. His practice involved work with many local and state public sector clients, including the Vermont Secretary of State's Office, Brattleboro Area Middle School, Windham South West School District, and the Vermont Labor Department Management Team.

Bob has successfully led financial turnarounds.

- When Bob began his service in South Burlington, the City was experiencing a period of financial strain and turmoil. Together with the City Manager, Bob was part of a team that successfully unearthed the severe nature of South Burlington's financial troubles. Bob co-led the development of a plan to restore the City's fiscal stability after cumulative fiscal problems exceeding \$17 million and skillfully co-led the implementation of that plan which turned the City's finances around. Within two years, the City had gone from running deficits to running surpluses, while resolving an over \$6 million cumulative deficit in the City's General Fund and Enterprise Funds budgets. Additionally, for the first time in South Burlington, Bob created ten-year capital and seven-year debt service plans to promote the long-term fiscal stability of the City. The finance team instituted internal controls that addressed previous audit findings, leading to the most recent audit finding no "Significant Deficiencies" or "Material Weaknesses."
- Bob performed another turnaround in Wilmington, where he served as Town Manager for more than four years. There too, he inherited significant financial challenges. Within the first year of his service, Bob created a more transparent and understandable budget that reflected accurately the Town's true expenses and revenues.

Bob has valuable experience with pension reform and leading union negotiations.

- In South Burlington, Bob co-led a management contract negotiating team with all four City bargaining units. This experience included working with bargaining unit leadership to identify ways to reduce costs and to modify membership benefits that saved the City money, while holding harmless unit members.
- Bob co-negotiated an \$8.2 million refunding of an underfunded pension program. Stabilizing the pension fund involved both long-term benefit changes to lower the cost of the plan and a City Council-approved pension obligation bond.
- Bob has had the valuable experience of sitting at both ends of the collective bargaining negotiating table. Bob worked as a laborer in a steel mill early in his working career and was a member of the United Steelworkers of America, serving as a union officer who participated in collective bargaining negotiations on behalf of the union.

Bob has served his communities with distinction and has an ability to work across partisan lines.

- In 2004, Bob was recognized as the Legislator of the Year by the non-partisan Vermont League of Cities and Towns.
- After voting in favor of Civil Unions in 2000, Bob was re-elected to his House seat in 2001 although his district included two towns that opposed Civil Unions, one in an official Town Meeting vote and the other in a non-official vote.

Further details of Bob's career can be found in the attached resume. If confirmed, Bob would be appointed at Step 7 and receive a starting annual salary of \$121,506, and would begin his service to the City on June 3, 2013. As Bob has shared with those of you whom he has met, he will establish residency in Burlington and become a Burlington voter, fulfilling the City's residency requirement for a CAO, while also retaining his recently-purchased home in Hinesburg.

Thank you for your consideration of Bob Rusten as the next Burlington CAO.

ROBERT RUSTEN
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Hinesburg, VT 05461
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WORK EXPERIENCE:

October 2010 – Present

South Burlington, Vermont
Deputy City Manager, Chief Financial Officer and City Treasurer

Responsibilities/Accomplishments:

- Co-leading management contract negotiating team with all four city bargaining units.
- Instituting internal financial controls to address audit findings prior to tenure with city.
- As Chief Financial Officer, overseeing and re-organizing department operations and responsibilities.
- Instituting financial transparency and reporting systems to City Manager and City Council.
- Leading development of new budgeting and capital improvement program processes to conform to charter requirements.
- Co-leading development of plan to restore city fiscal stability after cumulative fiscal problems exceeding \$17 million were unearthed. Resolving issues within two years of being hired.
- Reducing City's long-term debt while developing fiscal strategy for long-desired city projects.
- Co-negotiating \$8.169 million refunding of underfunded pension program.
- Serving as in-house consultant to management team on leadership development, team building and other strategic management needs.
- Leading implementation of pension advisory committee efforts in public reporting, education of staff and on-going effort to explore opportunities for financial management of pension funds exceeding \$22 million (including city schools).
- Identifying ways to raise non-property tax revenue, cut costs without negatively impacting services, plan for future needs and resolve revenue and expenditure issues creatively.
- Understanding health insurance issues resulting in improved insurance plans at lower city costs.

June 2006 – October 2010

Wilmington Vermont
Town Manager

Responsibilities/Accomplishments:

- Overseeing daily operations of resort town with approximately 2,300 residents and 10,000 visitors.
- Writing draft General Fund, Highway, and Wastewater Treatment budgets and administering town-meeting approved final expenditures and revenues budgets.
- Lowering town tax rate three years in a row while investing in town infrastructure and growth.
- Helping Listers organize town-wide reappraisal.
- Creating numerous citizens' committees such as Town Beautification and Memorial Hall Board.
- Structuring Tri-Town Economic Development Committee (Wilmington, Dover and Whitingham): three towns working together to create and implement economic development strategy.
- Instituting energy efficiency plans supported with town revenue and grants which reduced costs and carbon footprint.
- Involving staff to generate cost-saving ideas.
- Assisting town Emergency Management Director's response to a major flood, fire and ice storm.
- Improving town human resource systems such as job descriptions and performance appraisals.
- Analyzing a variety of health insurance plans to balance needs of town and employees.

Recognition:

- Elected to Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Board of Directors, 2008 to 2010.
- Chair of VLCT Finance, Administration and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, 2010.
- Appointed to Vermont Legislative Education Financing and Effectiveness Committee, 2009.
- Appointed to Vermont Economic Development and Planning Services Oversight Committee, 2010.

January 1997 – 2006
(Did not run for re-election)

State of Vermont
State Representative

Responsibilities/Accomplishments:

- Serving on Ways and Means Committee 2001 to 2006, (Vice Chair and Ranking Member) and Governmental Operations Committee 1997 to 2000 (Clerk).
- Writing and negotiating process resulting in new state education funding law.
- Facilitating two-year successful collaboration between two school districts.
- Helping design and enact overhaul of Vermont Income Tax System – personal and corporate.
- Initiating and leading successful efforts between state, federal and local agencies to reconstruct highway – one of the largest highway projects in recent state history that had stalled for 20 years.
- Working with Governor, Republican and Democratic House leaders, negotiated and implemented largest tax cut in Vermont history.
- Serving as Vice Chair of Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules.
- Analyzing state health insurance issues, assessing solutions, and recommending funding plans.

Recognition:

- Legislator of the Year award by non-partisan Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

April 1991 – 2006

21st Century Consulting
President

Responsibilities:

- Creating and implementing customer relations/quality management processes in the private, public and governmental sectors.
- Designing and presenting interactive training sessions covering areas such as total quality management, re-organization re-engineering, team building, personnel practices, customer satisfaction, quality costs and standards, problem-solving tools and preventing harassment.
- Assessing skill level of management staff; creating and conducting appropriate training to upgrade management staff's abilities.
- Facilitating strategic planning and other types of organizational meetings.
- Conducting employee and customer surveys: goal; design; compilation; and assessment.
- Facilitation conflict resolution efforts between individuals and groups.

August 1989 – April 1991

New Directions Management Services, Inc.
Senior Project Associate

Responsibilities:

- Designing and presenting multi-session workshops, including Total Quality Management, personnel practices and basic/advanced supervision.
- Conducting one-on-one skill development trainings for managers and supervisors.
- Researching and writing personnel policy and performance appraisal manuals and job descriptions.

August 1988 – August 1989

Mount Snow Ltd.
Recruitment and Training Supervisor

Responsibilities:

- Developing and implementing plan to hire 800 seasonal employees.
- Training supervisors in interviewing techniques and legal technicalities of hiring and firing.

EDUCATION:

Lower Merion High School
Temple University, Philadelphia, PA