

# The City of Newport, Rhode Island

Invites Candidates to Apply for The **Position of City Manager**

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Newport, Rhode Island is a unique City known for its historic charm, world class sailing, and natural beauty. Founded in 1639, Newport was a beacon for religious tolerance and acceptance. Landmarks from those early settlement days can still be found when walking the streets. Important period architecture is still preserved and occupied even now. During the 18th century Newport was one of the five leading ports in colonial North America and received international attention for its harbor and trade. Many of the homes and shops built during that time still stand today and Newport is recognized for having one of the largest concentrations of colonial homes and buildings in America. The gilded mansions of the 19th and 20th century are still standing and provide further illustration of the growth and beauty of Newport. The City is a visual delight and the ocean and bay provide world class boating and swimming, making Newport a true destination town for visitors and residents alike.

The City has a year round population of 25,000 residents with 4 million visitors annually. With its close proximity to New York and Boston, Newport is within driving distance of all major East Coast transportation hubs. Cruise ships anchor in the deep water harbor and regional bus lines arrive daily to the City of Newport Welcome Center.

The United States Navy has been a presence in Newport since the Revolutionary War. Naval Station Newport is home to several prestigious military educational institutions: the Naval War College, the Naval Command College, and the Naval Justice School. The base is home to more than 50 Naval and defense commands/activities and is the premier site for training Officers, Officer Candidates, Senior Enlisted personnel and Midshipmen candidates.

Newport is home to over 35 parks, 3 historic cemeteries and the famous 3.5 mile Cliff Walk, which was named one of 10 "Great Public Spaces in America" by the American Planning Association in 2014. In addition Newport's parks include 18 tennis courts, 15 playgrounds, 6 basketball courts, a dog park and a skate park. Easton's Beach is located at the start of the Cliff Walk and is a ¾ mile long surf beach with boardwalk.

Colleges and institutions of higher learning also have Newport addresses. Salve Regina University opened in 1947 and continues to excel as a private, non-profit, co-educational university. In 1996

an Act of Congress established and located the prestigious Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy at Salve Regina. The Community College of Rhode Island is the only community college in Rhode Island and the largest in New England. They have a Newport campus which offers a full course schedule. The International Yacht Restoration School is also based in Newport. This center of learning is a world-class experiential learning school with a hands-on education model dedicated to teaching highly technical and deeply craft-oriented career skills. It currently has three accredited schools: School of Composites Technology, School of Boatbuilding & Restoration and School of Marine Systems. The University of Rhode Island in Kingston is a short 25 minute ride across the bridge and the Ivy League Brown University is located within 30 minutes in the capital City of Providence.



The City continues to have a varied and robust religious community. Just a few of the still active notable religious communities are highlighted here. The Touro Synagogue opened in 1763 and is the oldest surviving Jewish synagogue building in North America, dating to the colonial era. The synagogue is a National Historic Landmark. Trinity Church, on Queen Anne Square is a historic parish church in the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island. Founded in 1698, it is the oldest Episcopal parish in the state. It is a National Historic Landmark. St. Mary's was founded in 1828, and was the first Roman Catholic parish established in the state. The church was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2008.



As a center of arts and culture Newport has a multitude of activities. There are numerous museums, art galleries, dance troupes and musical presentations available year round catering to all tastes and interests. The iconic Newport Folk Festival continues to be held at historic Fort Adams and draws participants from around the world. The Newport Jazz Festival was the first outdoor music festival in the United States and is a staple in the jazz world. Outdoor films and concerts are offered throughout the warmer weather in City parks.

Newport is considered a world class sailing destination and has been welcoming the sailing community for centuries. The Americas Cup Races were defended for over 50 years in Newport during the 1900's and in 2012 the City was a stop on the race schedule. In May 2015 the City will be a North American stop in the Volvo Ocean Race. In addition to the world class races Sail Newport, Inc., founded in 1983, is a non-profit organization that is home to New England's largest public sailing center and is considered Rhode Island's premier public sailing site. A short 5-block walk from City Hall is one of the oldest ballparks in the country. Cardine's Field continues to greet fans during the season to see many hometown teams play as well as the Newport Gulls, a Collegiate baseball team with its home base in Newport.



## GOVERNMENT

The City government currently operates under a Home Rule charter, which was adopted in 1953. This charter provides for a City Council/City Manager as the form of governance.

### City Council

The City Council is comprised of four members who are elected at large and three members who are elected from three wards. The term for all seven councilors is two years. The most recent elections were held in November 2014. The councilors elect a Chairperson from the at large members and the Chairperson holds the honorary title of Mayor.

The City Council is the legislative body of the City. They have the powers to enact, amend or repeal ordinances that relate to the City's property, affairs, finances and government. These powers include the ability to create offices, departments and agencies within the City. The councilors are tasked with preserving the public peace, health and safety and the establishment of personnel policies. They are able to authorize the issuance of bonds and to provide for an annual audit.

### City Manager

The City Manager is the chief administrative officer of the City. The Manager is appointed by a majority vote of the City Council and is responsible to the Council for the administration and management of the City. The Manager exercises the authority to appoint or remove officers or employees of the City as well as supervising all administrative departments, divisions, offices and agencies per the Charter. The Manager submits an annual budget and annual report to the Council, recommends pay schedules for City employees and recommends to the Council the adoption of such measures as deemed necessary for the health, safety and welfare of the City.

#### *The duties of the City Manager include the following:*

- To see that the laws and ordinances are enforced;
- To see that all terms and conditions imposed in favor of the City in any contract or franchise are faithfully kept and performed;
- To keep the Council informed at all times concerning the financial condition and needs of the City and other pertinent matters relating to its administration;
- To recommend to the Council such measures as he/she may consider necessary or expedient;
- To prepare and recommend to the Council an annual budget;
- To prepare and present to the Council a comprehensive annual report of the financial transactions and other activities of the City following the close of each fiscal year;
- To make any study or investigation which in his/her opinion may be for the best interest of the City or which may be ordered by the Council;
- To approve all rules and regulations of the several administrative officers and departments under his/her jurisdiction before they shall become effective;
- To perform such other duties as may be required of him/her by the Council;
- It shall be the duty of the City Manager to attend meetings of the Council.

## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

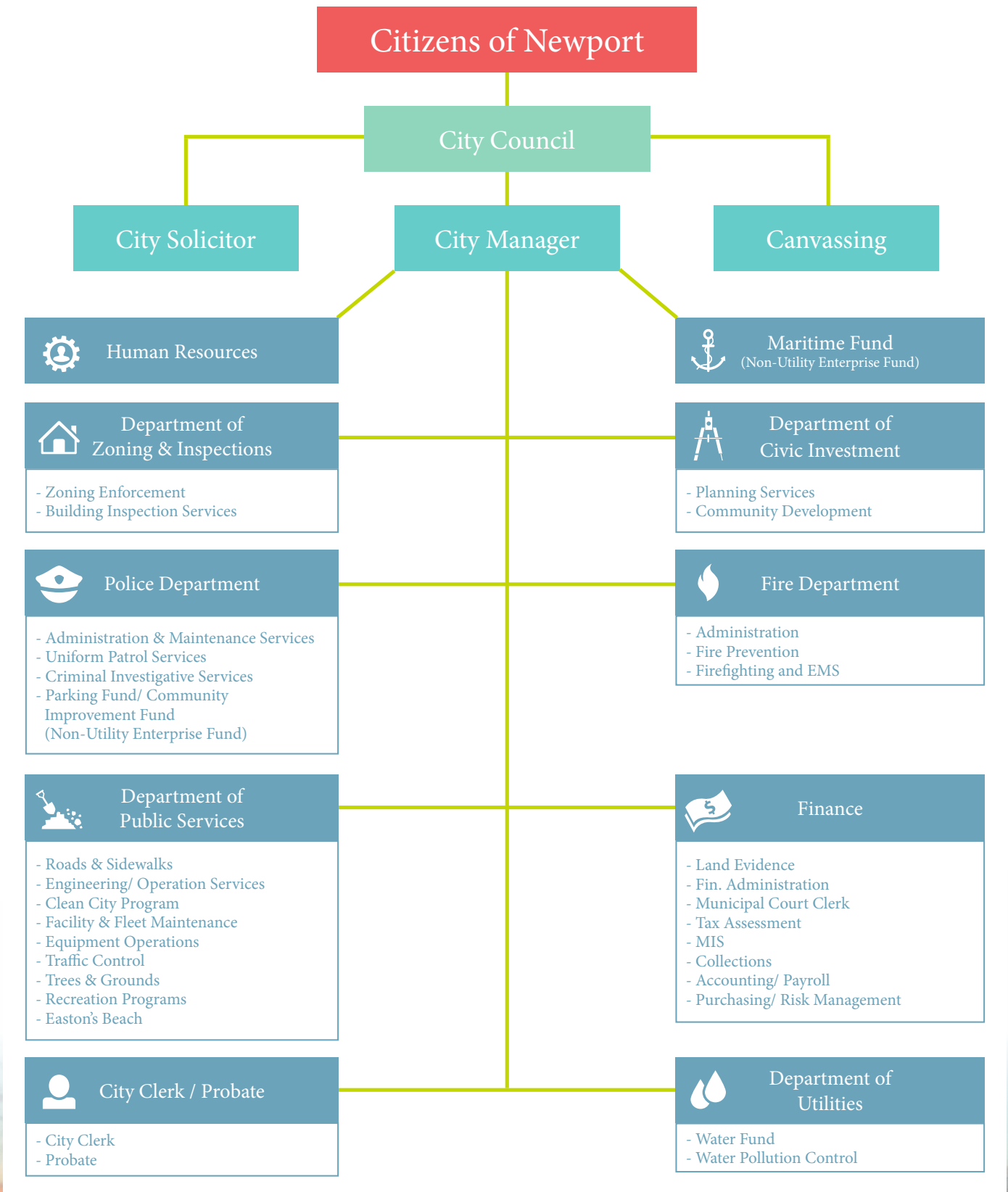
The municipal services of the City of Newport include the following departments (see department detail on the organizational chart on the following page):

- **Public Safety (Police and Fire)**
- **Human Resources**
- **Department of Zoning and Inspection**
- **Department of Public Services**
- **City Clerk/Probate**
- **Maritime Fund**
- **Department of Civic Investment**
- **Finance**
- **Department of Utilities**



# The City of Newport, RI

## Organizational Chart



## Classified and Unclassified Positions

The City has approximately 315 classified positions most of which are in four different unions:

- **Police-FOP**
- **Fire-IAFF**
- **General Government-AFSCME**
- **Professional/Supervisor Union-NEARI**

The City has approximately 7 unclassified positions and about 150 seasonal positions.

The Police Department employs 78 uniformed officers supervised by a Police Chief overseeing administration, criminal investigations, patrol, dispatch and parking.

The Fire Department employs 98 Firefighters supervised by the Fire Chief with 3 fire stations broken down into 4 platoons working 10 and 14 hours shifts including fire dispatch. Fire Department has EMS and water rescue capabilities.

The Water Division of the City's Utilities Department includes two water treatment plants (one in Newport and one in Portsmouth). The City recently completed an \$85 million upgrade to the plants. The service area for the Newport Water system includes: 14,500 retail customers in Newport, Middletown and a small section of Portsmouth. The Water Division also sells water wholesale to Portsmouth Water & Fire District and the Naval Station Newport. The Water Division is regulated by the state Public Utilities Commission and rates must be approved by the Commission.

The Water Pollution Control Division of the Utilities Department recently entered into a Consent Decree with the USEPA to address compliance with the EPA combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Policy of the Clean Water Act. The Water Pollution Control division is in the process of implementing a \$45 million improvement project at the wastewater treatment facility as part of its long-term CSO control plan approved by the EPA. The City's wastewater treatment facility also receives and treats wastewater flows from the Town of Middletown and Naval Station Newport.

## BUDGET FY15

The **2014-15 Fiscal Year City Adopted Budget** equaled **\$121,971,447** which included **\$23,377,157** for the Public School system, and **\$13,728,827** and **\$11,060,281** for the Water and Water Pollution Control Enterprise funds, respectively. Local tax revenue for the adopted budget equaled **\$74,395,501**.

### Schools

The Charter directs the School Committee to submit a budget for the operations of the schools and the City Council has the authority to appropriate a total amount for the schools but not the specific line items. The general administration of the City's School System is directed by a seven member School Committee elected from the City at large at the regular biennial elections. The School Committee has general control of all policies affecting the administration, maintenance and operation of the public school. The School Committee appoints and removes the superintendent and provides advice on appointments and removal of other school staff. Newport Public Schools include one large elementary school, a middle school and a high school which have all undergone renovations or reconstruction in the last 10 years.



## CIVIC INVESTMENT (Economic Development)

Economic Development is a key issue for the City of Newport. The current economic engine in Newport includes: Hospitality, Retail, Tourism, Maritime Industry, and Technology to support the Newport Hospital and Navy. There are three major projects which the City, State and Federal Government are working on to diversify the economic base and create new jobs and opportunities to the City of Newport.

- The Sheffield Techworks Accelerator is the repurposing of a 33,000 sq. ft. former elementary school for the purposes of public-private partnerships (P3) technology commercialization and acceleration in identified resilience related sectors. Resilience Sector includes projects such as alternative energy associated with microgrid technologies, green/blue infrastructure design to withstand large storms, cyber protection, monitoring oceans and maritime defense, etc. The Newport County Chamber of Commerce is partnering with the City in this effort with a \$1.6 million grant from the US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (USEDA) and a match from the City. Additional strategic partners include Salve Regina University, the University of Rhode Island and the Naval Undersea Warfare Center.
- The Newport Resilience Innovation Hub is using the Sheffield Techworks as a seeding opportunity to build additional facilities on 60+ acre mixed-use innovation hub area in the North End of the City near the exit ramp of the Pell Bridge. Public Sector partners include the City of Newport, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, the Rhode Island Turnpike & Bridge Authority and Rhode Island Division of Planning.
- The City of Newport, Town of South Kingstown, and State of Rhode Island have applied for a \$2.4 million Superstorm Sandy Disaster Relief Green Infrastructure Job Placement Grant from the US Housing and Urban Development CDBG fund. Award applications are being reviewed in Washington DC with anticipated determination award due in May 2015.

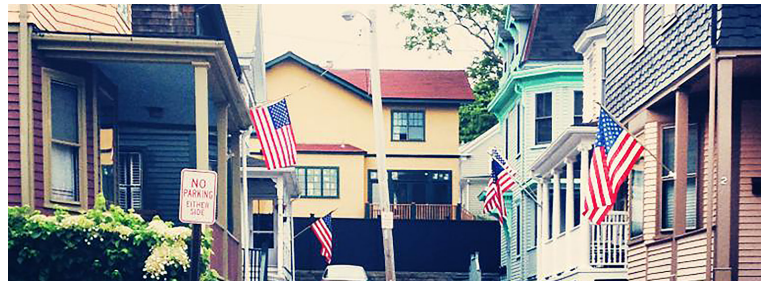


## CANDIDATE INFORMATION

### Characteristics

A strong candidate for the position of City Manager is a person who is or has:

- A strong and proven manager
- Knowledgeable about best practices in all municipal functions and particularly in municipal finances, utilities, planning and economic development – including hands on experience as a direct manager or supervisor of these services
- Demonstrated ability to think out of the box and to solve problems and implement projects
- Collaborative leader who builds coalitions and consensus with diverse groups such as neighborhoods groups, business community, foundations, military and non-profits
- Experience with infrastructure improvements both vertical and horizontal construction
- Team builder and communicator with staff and department heads
- Strategic plan development and implementation
- Proven skills in technology, public relations, public speaking, labor relations and contract negotiations
- Financial fortitude with municipal finance and budget experience
- Strong human resources management experience
- Personal characteristics that include: integrity, credibility, accessibility, people skills, confidence, sense of humor and good listening skills
- Ability to be a self-starter and proactive to inspire others to facilitate projects and improve processes
- Experience with economic development and working with various stakeholders and with regional partners
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Enjoys participating in the various aspects of the community
- Able to work with the City Council and understands the need to be responsive to City Council Members



### Qualifications

Requirements include an undergraduate degree in public administration, business administration or a closely related field combined with at least ten years of increasingly responsible experience in and knowledge of generally accepted practices in municipal administration. Labor relations experience is required. A Master's Degree in Public or Business Administration is preferred. Preference will also be given to experienced Town/City managers, Assistant Town/City managers and department heads from jurisdictions of comparable size and complexity with an emphasis on economic development, historic preservation, tourism and military base experience.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Implementation of economic development efforts such as Sheffield TechWorks Accelerator and realignment of Pell Bridge exit ramp to allow for North End Innovation Hub
- Stewardship of Newport's assets such as the harbor and beach, natural resources, tourism industry, historic buildings, businesses, diverse cultures and history
- Implementation of waste water and storm water separation along with upgrade of the plant to handle high water flows to prevent overflow into the Narragansett Bay and ocean
- Improvement of technology including the web site and social media microsite (Engage Newport) and to allow for more on-line payment capabilities
- Improvement of computerized customer service request system
- Opportunity to work with very active neighborhood groups, non-profits, foundations, special events organizations, etc.
- Implement renovations to Historic City Hall which includes an elevator to allow for ADA compliance
- Continue the financial efforts that have earned Newport a AA+ bond rating and continue to address the funding of pension plans and OPEB
- Develop a funding and implementation plan to improve infrastructure including roads, sidewalks, and facilities
- Opportunity to work with large utility functions that have recently gone through expansions
- Economic development that includes providing new jobs for low and middle income residents
- Ability to work with Federal, State, Military and Higher Education to implement the Innovation Hub



## COMPENSATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS

The starting salary for this position is negotiable depending on qualifications & experience - with an excellent benefits package which includes:

- ICMA Retirement Corporation – Plan Options
- Professional Membership
- Health Benefits and other employee benefits
- Permanent residency in the City of Newport is Preferred



For more information see the web site:  
[www.cityofnewport.com](http://www.cityofnewport.com)

***Newport is an EOE/AA/Equal Access Employer***

If you meet these qualifications and would like to be considered for the position of *City Manager of the City of Newport*, please email your resume and cover letter immediately to **Ms. Randi Frank** (*See contact information*)

***Deadline is April 27, 2015.***

**Ms. Randi Frank**

**Randi Frank Consulting, LLC**

7 Promontory Drive – Wallingford, CT 06492

**[randi@randifrank.com](mailto:randi@randifrank.com)**

**[www.randifrank.com](http://www.randifrank.com)**

**Phone 203-284-3707**

Consulting Partner **Robert Slavin** can be contacted at:

[slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net)

[www.slavinweb.com](http://www.slavinweb.com)

**Phone 770-449-4656**

**Fax 770-416-0848**

