

Leonard B. Sossamon
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September 29, 2021

Mayor Lauren Poe and City Commission
City of Gainesville
P.O. Box 490
Station 19
Gainesville, FL 32627-0490

Dear Mayor and City Commission:

Please accept this correspondence as my expression of interest in the position of Interim City Manager for the City of Gainesville. I believe I have the seasoned experience the Mayor and City Commission are seeking in an effective interim manager to provide enthusiastic leadership to Team Gainesville. My resume is forwarded for your consideration.

My specific skill set aligns very well with the expressed needs of the Mayor and City Commission. I am a forward-thinking, strategic leader and an involved manager with successes in management, financial affairs, economic development and redevelopment projects. I have managed multiple large-scale infrastructure projects simultaneously with proven success. To do so, a manager must be organized with capabilities of excellent communication skills and an achievement orientation.

My broad-based experience includes managing a county and a city located in the Tampa-St. Petersburg, Florida MSA, a county located in the Columbia, South Carolina MSA, and a rapidly growing city in the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, North Carolina MSA. I have extensive expertise with economic development and have negotiated multiple deals for my respective cities and counties. Examples include bringing the 1,000,000 square foot Concord Mills Super Regional Mall to the City of Concord, along with 4,000 plus hotel rooms and annexation of the Charlotte Motor Speedway. Both are in the top five tourist destinations of the Carolinas.

My successful redevelopment and historic preservation projects include two downtown commercial districts (Concord, NC and Newberry, SC) and an aging industrial park in Newberry, SC. During my tenure as Port Richey's Interim City Manager, I resurrected the waterfront overlay district and canal dredging projects.


Early in my career I recognized the value of building good management teams, developing solid growth plans and prospects, and collaboration. After creating a great management team in Concord, NC we collaborated with the State and Federal Governments to build the Concord Regional Airport. We used 80% Federal funding, 18% State funding, and 2% Concord funding. This successful project now contributes over one billion dollars annually to the North Carolina economy. Another similar success in this area is the redevelopment of the Brooksville Tampa Bay Regional Airport and Industrial Complex in Hernando County.

I have extensive experience in leading city and county governments through natural disasters. During my 7-year tenure as County Administrator for Hernando County Florida, I led the County through multiple hurricanes and tropical storms which produced flooding and millions of cubic yards of organic debris. As Interim City Manager for Port Richey, Florida, I led the City through the Covid-19 pandemic. I have FEMA training and certifications, and while in Hernando County, the Emergency Management Department reported directly to me.

Beyond management of Gainesville's day-to-day activities, infrastructure needs, and implementation of your policies, the intriguing challenge for the interim manager is to gain your respect, trust, and confidence as well as that of your staff and citizenry. These attributes are in my wheelhouse and Gainesville's need for a manager/leader with Florida local government experience. I am the candidate to manage and lead Gainesville in your transition phase with a "can do" attitude and with a vision for the future.

I welcome a meeting with the Mayor and City Commission to discuss my qualifications and commitment to public service. Thank you for taking the time to review my resume. I can be reached at (704) 796-8889.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonard B. Sossamon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leonard" being more prominent.

Leonard B. Sossamon

Attachment

LEONARD B. SOSSAMON, JR.**5601 Springs Avenue, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577**

Home (704) 786-4271

Email: jordnbrn@aol.com

Cell (704) 796-8889

SUMMARY

More than thirty years of local government experience with expertise in the following areas:

- Operations and Project Management
- Strategic Planning and Operations Analysis
- Organizational Change and Development
- Financial Operations and Budget
- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Media Relations
- Customer Service

An innovative leader with demonstrated organizational, analytical and communication skills. Experienced in managing change and specializing in turnarounds. Achievement oriented with foresight. A dedicated team player who can work independently within the organizational framework.

RELEVANT LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE**Interim City Manager, Port Richey, Florida****2020-2021**

Since June 2020, I have served as the Interim City Manager with all the duties and responsibilities of the City's Charter. During this period, I worked with the City's various departments to prepare the FY2020-21 budget. I developed an innovative solution to Port Richey's capital project funding needs while providing for adequate funding and continuity to the City's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Most recently I have concentrated on resurrecting Port Richey's waterfront overlay district physical improvements and canal dredging program.

Jordan Brown Management Corporation, Concord, North Carolina**2019-Present**

During this time, I have developed contracts via my management company and my real estate and construction companies. I consult with Prima Luce Energy Systems of North Carolina and Taber Consulting of Tennessee. The former is a new energy development company, while the latter is a multi-use development company. Most recently, I negotiated a contract to serve as the Interim City Manager for the City of Port Richey, Florida.

County Administrator, Hernando County, Florida**2012 – 2019**

Hernando County is a county with a population of 188,500 covering 589 square miles. It is located approximately 40 miles north of Tampa on Florida's Gulf of Mexico coast. The county seat is Brooksville with a population of 7,500, so the county is responsible for serving the remaining population with all usual county and municipal services. This includes water and sewer services to over 60,000 households. It also includes providing contractual solid waste collection services to county residents and operation of the

county's landfill and recycling efforts. Also, the County Administrator is responsible for operating a full-service fire and rescue department of about 300 full time firefighters, first responders, and EMTs.

From 2015 through 2018, the Economic Development team managed over 500,000 square feet of new manufacturing space in Hernando County. This includes new companies recruited to come build in Hernando County, as well as expansions. These efforts produced over 500 new jobs and the retention of over 350 jobs. Major expansion projects included Barrette Outdoor Living/AlumiGuard, Flagstone Pavers, Airofog USA LLC, Surge Suppression LLC, Composite Motors, Premier Pharmacy Labs, and Monster Transmissions. New businesses recruited include e-TeleQuote Insurance, Inc., Successful Acquisitions and Baker Parts. Also, ICTC and NCIS elevators expanded creating new jobs. In 2018, we completed negotiations for a new 200,000 square foot cold storage facility for a gain of 60 new jobs. It is known as Frigitek Cold Storage and will be located at the county owned and operated Brooksville Tampa Bay Regional Airport and Technology Center. Throughout this time period, we managed 18 to 25 active projects per year. Hernando County's incentive package for new and expanding businesses totaled \$1.5 million and produced a new tax base of over \$50 million. These funds are paid to the company over 5 – 7 calendar years.

Within less than six months on the job, Hernando County was struck by several tropical storms and hurricanes. I quickly discovered the county had no bonafide Stormwater Management Plan. In a series of meetings with the County Engineer and the Public Works Director, we compiled the appropriate best available data from past events and secured BOCC approval for development of a stormwater plan based on Best Management Practices (BMPs). To date, the county has accomplished 80% of the BMP goals (7 individual projects). It continues to acquire land for designated retention areas (DRAs) and now employs a stormwater engineer.

Duties and Responsibilities of County Administrator:

- Chief executive officer of a county government with 800 employees in the General Fund, Fire and Rescue, Utilities and Solid Waste, Transportation and Public Works. This also includes emergency management, economic development, planning and land use, parks and recreation, health, social services, human resources, veteran affairs, and stormwater.
- Preparation and administration of the county's operating and capital improvements budget.
- Implementation of Board of Commissioners policies and directives.
- Media representation of the county on television and radio.
- Administration of day-to-day operations as well as long range planning and strategic planning.

Achievements:

- Personally authored/developed Hernando County's first Strategic Plan, along with measurement matrix for progress.
- Spearheaded development of county's first long range road paving and redevelopment plan. Took county from paving only two miles of lime rock roads per year to over twenty miles per year.

- Responsible for development of county's first Stormwater and Flood Management Plan.
- Restructured County's economic development recruitment process and retention efforts to successfully attract new manufacturing companies and to retain existing companies.

County Administrator, Newberry SC**2004 – 2006**

Newberry is a county with a population of 45,000 covering approximately 700 square miles. It is located adjacent to the Columbia, South Carolina metro area. I-26 traverses the county from Columbia on the east, to Greenville-Spartanburg on the west. This location provides the county with the transportation access to metro airports and seaports necessary to be a major manufacturing center. Also, having borders on Lake Murray and Lake Greenwood has made Newberry County a tourist destination and a desirable retirement community. Both sectors are continually developing.

Duties and Responsibilities as County Administrator:

- Chief executive officer of a county government with over 400 employees and \$30 million budget. Oversight responsibility for the following functions: roads, stormwater planning, zoning, economic development, parks and recreation, social services, law enforcement, jails and court facilities, finance, general services and personnel.
- Preparation and administration of County's operating and capital budget.
- Implementation of Council directed policy.
- Media representation of the County including appearances on television and radio, interviews with the print media and preparation of press releases.
- Administration of day-to-day operations as well as long range issues.

Achievements:

- Restored financial integrity to county owned nursing home and assisted living center by refinancing their bonded indebtedness. Reduced the term of 30 years and rate of 8.875% to 22 years with a 4.625% rate which saved the County \$10,000,000 over the life of the bonds.
- Received the Bond Buyer's 2005 Deal of the Year, and the 2006 J. Mitchell Graham Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties for the above efforts. Due to use of Special Purpose Revenue bonds not using tax dollars. It was recognized as innovative, creative and replicable. I replicated the deal within six months to refinance the bonds of the county owned hospital thereby saving another \$3,000,000 over the life of the bonds.
- Structured acquisition of two new industrial parks for the county comprising over 500 acres. Initially recruited two new industries creating over 200 new jobs and over \$50 million in new tax base.
- Recruited Caterpillar to open plant in one of the county owned industrial parks. The new plant was over 600,000 square feet. Initially, over 150 new jobs were created to build generators. More jobs were promised.

- Renovated County's historic courthouse. Project was over \$2 million and took about two years to complete. Included restoring historic attributes and expanding and finishing the basement for new office space and reconstructing the second-floor court room.

City Manager, City of Concord, NC**1985 – 1998****Planning and Community Development Director****1980 – 1985**

Concord is a city with a population of 89,891 covering approximately 60 square miles. It is located in Cabarrus County, North Carolina which is centrally located in a multi-county metropolitan area with a population of almost 2 million. The population of Concord, as well as the metropolitan area is well diversified. Concord is home to Charlotte Motor Speedway, while the metropolitan area is a national financial center. Concord is a progressive city with a hometown feel visited by millions of tourists each year.

Duties and Responsibilities as City Manager:

- Chief executive officer of a municipal government with 700 employees and \$100 million budget. Oversight responsibility for the following functions: police, roads, stormwater drainage, water, sewer and electric utility, parks, recreation, planning, zoning, finance, general services, personnel, fire and aviation.
- Implementation of Council directed policy. Administration of the city's day-to-day operations as well as identification and resolution of long range issues. Oversight of the plans to expand the city's geographic size, population, and industrial/commercial base per the City Council's adopted goals and objectives.
- Preparation and administration of the city's operating and capital budgets.
- Negotiation with public and private sector entities on a variety of issues ranging from economic development and growth to service contracts.
- Media representation of the city including appearances on television and radio, interviews with the print media, and preparation of press releases.
- Responsible for the city's compliance with county, state, and federal regulations such as health, environmental and EEOC.

Achievements:

- Restored morale and built a high performance management team by restructuring and developing existing staff. Eliminated a semi-autonomous utility commission to become more responsive to residents' needs per City Council. Morale was improved dramatically by bringing these employees under the city's performance pay plan, and the Council and staff were able to better respond to citizens since we had direct control. Complaints dropped by over 50% within six months.
- Instituted an annual customer satisfaction survey to measure the effectiveness of city services. Integrated the survey into the budget and the performance monitoring process.

- Revamped budget and financial systems. Won the Government Finance Officers' Association's Distinguished Budget Award for twelve consecutive years.
- Restored financial integrity to the water and sewer utility fund. By eliminating the semi-autonomous utility commission, I was able to bring all such operations and budgets under the City Council and City Manager. This allowed us to expand the water and sewer systems to virtually serve the entire county and to triple the size of the electric system. Throughout these efforts, we were able to maintain level utility rates for all three systems.
- Replaced general obligation bonds with revenue bonds to expand the city's water, sewer and electric systems. This was in concert with the City Council's directives to grow the city by statutory annexation. My plans enabled me to meet the Council's expectations to grow the city without raising taxes, from 8 square miles with 16,000 people, to 50 square miles with 50,000 people in about 12 years. My long range plans are still being used by Concord.
- Oversight of planning, financing and development of Concord Regional Airport and Municipal Golf Course. Constructed the \$27 million airport in less than 3 years and the \$8 million golf course simultaneously.
- Recruitment of Concord Mills and oversight of its planning. Concord Mills is a super-regional shopping center with over 1 million square feet under roof. It is now the number one tourist attraction in North Carolina with the Charlotte Motor Speedway in the top six. When I started the planning for this development, there were no hotels located at this I-85 exit, now there are over 1,000 hotel rooms and over 2 million square feet of retail.
- Privatized solid waste collection and landfill operations. Negotiated contract with BFI that resulted in the city not having to pay tipping fees for the life of the landfill for solid waste originating in the city which hosted their private landfill. This saves Concord over \$2 million per year. Initiated city's recycling program.
- Directed efforts to rebuild city's electric system after hurricanes and ice storms. After one hurricane, 90% of city's customers were without power and I led around the clock restoration efforts via mutual aid with other electric cities.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Jordan Brown Management Corporation**2006 – 2012**

Private consulting business; commercial and residential real estate acquisitions, sales and property management.

Alliance Development Group, LLC, Charlotte, NC**2006 – 2012**

ADG specializes in developing single tenant income producing properties. Serving as Chief Operating Officer/Executive Vice-President, I was responsible for project oversight and development. Projects include Quaker Steak and Lube restaurants, Walgreens, Goodyear Auto Centers.

Hunter and Brown, Inc., Concord, NC**1998 – 2003**

Hunter and Brown was a private partnership company specializing in the redevelopment of downtown properties and commercial parks. As a firm, we redeveloped over 100,000 square feet of mixed-use space for our company. We also consulted with other developers and municipal governments on development projects. We leased and managed commercial properties for ourselves and other companies.

EDUCATION**University of North Carolina, Charlotte****MA Urban Geography**

Emphasis on city and county planning and economic development.

University of North Carolina, Charlotte**Bachelor of Arts**

Majored in Political Science, minored in Sociology and Psychology. Served as Justice on Student Body Court.

North Carolina Institute of Government**Certificate**

Received Municipal Administration Certificate.

South Carolina Executive Institute**Certificate**

Received certificate from this multi-campus/multi-discipline program which focuses on problem solving.

ICMA-CM Pending**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS****ICMA member since 1985****Cabarrus Bank & Trust – Board of Directors (Retired)****Concord Downtown Development Corporation – 2008 President and 2007-10 Board of Directors****Pasco Hernando State College Foundation Board****Brooksville Ridge Kiwanis Club Board of Directors, 2018 Recipient of Kiwanian of the Year****Advisory Committee for Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Brooksville Agricultural &****Environmental Research Station (BAERS)**

References for Leonard B. Sossamon, Jr.

1. **Scott Tremblay, Mayor**
Port Richey, Florida
Cell phone: (727) 534-1814
2. **Wayne Dukes**
Hernando County, Florida Commissioner
Home: (352) 596-8383
Cell phone: (352) 263-8353
3. **Susan Fellers**
Clerk to Newberry County, SC County Council
Home: (803) 364-4048
Cell phone: (803) 622-8496
4. **Gordon L. Belo**
Former Concord, NC City Attorney
Office: (704) 788-3142
Cell phone: (980) 621-7138

