

Executive Recruitment for

WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA

GovHR USA is pleased to announce the recruitment and selection process for the Fire Chief for the City of Winchester, Virginia. This brochure provides background information on the City of Winchester and on the Winchester Fire Department as well as the requirements and expected qualifications for the position. Candidates interested in applying for the position should submit their résumé and cover letter electronically, along with contact information for five (5) work-related references by July 10, 2020 to consultant Tim Sashko, Vice-President, GovHR USA via www.GovHRjobs.com

Tim Sashko, Vice President

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Formal Applications should be submitted to:
www.GovHRjobs.com



ONE DEPARTMENT - ONE FAMILY - ONE GOAL!

FIRE CHIEF



PROFESSIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The City of **Winchester, VA (pop. 27,932)**, located at the top of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia is a vibrant, historic community welcoming visitors with warm hospitality for over 270 years. Old Town Winchester hosts over 30 restaurants, 60 fun shops and numerous history sites and museums, including Stonewall Jackson's Headquarters Museum, George Washington's Office Museum, and a 45-block National Register Historic District. The Old Town area also features a pedestrian mall, eclectic mix of shops featuring antiques, fine furnishings, gift items, local and regional works of art and fine clothing. Visitors and residents alike enjoy the variety of restaurants featuring outdoor café dining with a historic ambiance. The City is seeking experienced chief officers with strong leadership skills as candidates for its next Fire Chief.

The City covers 9.3 square miles (virtually all of which is land) and is located in the Shenandoah Valley between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Allegheny Mountains approximately 75 miles west of Washington, D.C. Winchester has been long known as the "Apple Capital" and was surrounded by vast orchards. Each spring, the City plays host for ten days to over 250,000 visitors who converge upon the city to witness the famous Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival, which has existed since 1924. Winchester also hosts the world's largest Firefighters' parade the Friday before the Grand Feature Parade on Saturday. Winchester serves as the County Seat of Frederick County, but is an independent City and home to Shenandoah University, Winchester Medical Center and the business headquarters of Continental (O'Sullivan), National Fruit and Rubbermaid. Federal agencies with operations in the Winchester area include the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

The Fire Department is an effective combination modern fire department comprised of four (4) volunteer owned fire stations. Those volunteer fire companies include the Friendship Volunteer Fire Company, the Rouss Volunteer Fire Company, the Shawnee Volunteer Fire Company, and the South End Volunteer Fire Company. The City of Winchester provides the staffing for each of the stations working a 24/48 shift schedule. Alongside the Chief, the department has 72 positions which include 63 field operations, training, EMS billing, and administrative functions. The volunteer component additionally adds twenty-one (21) active operational volunteers and sixty

(60) active administrative volunteer members. Collectively, the volunteers own the stations, all the ambulances and apparatus that are utilized for emergency response within the city. The department provides 24-hour fire protection and Advanced Life Support (ALS) medical services and responded to over 6,000 calls in 2019 with approximately 75% of the calls as EMS emergencies. The department received an ISO Class 3 rating in 2014 and was upgraded to a Class 2 in 2018. The City and Department are focused on services and Community Risk Reduction outreach.

The successful candidate will provide:

- Possession of a valid and appropriate driver's license.
- Possess and maintains valid and appropriate certificates for the following: Fire Officer – Level I, II, III, & IV NFPA 1403 Compliance Officer, NFA – Incident Safety Officer, Fire Instructor – Level I & II, Firefighter Level II, Emergency Medical Technician, Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (Level III), Driver Operator – Pumper AND Aerial, Mayday Firefighter Down and Hazardous Material Operations.
- Certificates must be available and recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Requirements specified in the NIMS compliance manual.

Successful candidates must possess:

- Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Fire Science or related field and extensive experience of a wide and progressively responsible nature in fire and rescue service.
- A Master's Degree is preferred.
- Graduation from the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program and Emergency Manager and Incident Manager Certifications preferred.

The annual salary for this position is \$110,000 (+/-) depending upon qualifications and reports directly to the City Manager. The City of Winchester, VA also offers an attractive and competitive benefits package. Interested professionals should submit a résumé, cover letter and contact information for five (5) work-related references by July 10, 2020 attention Tim Sashko at: www.GovHRjobs.com. **Electronic submissions are required.** Telephone inquiries: GovHR USA (847) 380-3240. **THE CITY OF WINCHESTER IS PROUD TO BE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.**



COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Winchester is an independent city located in the northwestern portion of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The settlement of Winchester began as early as 1729, when Quakers such as Abraham Hollingsworth migrated up the Great Valley along the long-traveled Indian Path (later called the Great Wagon Road by the colonists from Pennsylvania) and was founded by English Col. James Wood in 1744. The Winchester area became home to many Scotch-Irish, Quaker, and German immigrants who established some of the oldest Presbyterian, Quaker, Lutheran and Anglican churches in the Valley. George Washington spent a good portion of his young life in Winchester helping survey the Fairfax land grant for Thomas, Sixth Lord Fairfax, as well as performing other surveying work in the area. In addition, George Washington was elected to his first public office, the Virginia House of Burgesses from Winchester. Winchester and the surrounding area were the site of numerous battles during the American Civil War, as the Confederate and Union armies strove to control that portion of the Shenandoah Valley. Seven major battlefields are located within the original boundaries of Old Frederick County. Winchester was a key strategic position for the Confederate States Army during the war



and changed hands more than 70 times during the Civil War.

Winchester was the first city south of the Potomac River to install electric lights and has the 3rd oldest public water system in the United States. Winchester has a rich musical history is also the childhood home of Country music legend Patsy Cline and African-American Jazz musician John Kirby. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Willa Cather was also from the Winchester area.

As of the 2016 census, there were 11,907 housing units in

the city. The median age of the population was 37.6 years old with a median income for the city of \$46,466/year. Winchester recently was ranked #11 for small metro area in the country and #1 in Virginia for business and careers by *Forbes* as well as being included in the “10 Best Small Towns in America to Retire” by *Readers Digest* and *Kiplinger’s Personal Finance Magazine*. Winchester is the home to the Winchester Royals, which is part of the Valley Baseball League, a National Collegiate Athletic Association-sanctioned collegiate summer baseball league in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Shenandoah University is located in Winchester and has numerous sports teams in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference. The Winchester area is also home to the Winchester Regional Airport.

CITY OF WINCHESTER GOVERNMENT

The City is organized under the Council-Manager form of government. The governing body, the Common Council, is elected by voters under a ward system defined in Section Four of the Winchester City Charter. Between 2006 and 2008, City Council transitioned from a thirteen (13) member body to a nine (9) member body. Today, two council members are elected from each of the four wards, and the Mayor is elected at large. The City’s FY19 adopted budget is \$251 million with the Fire and Rescue Department’s budget at \$6,975,600 from the General Fund and \$1,125,000 from the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Fund.

WINCHESTER VISION

To provide a safe, vibrant, sustainable community while striving to constantly improve the quality of life for our citizens and economic partners.

FIRE DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF WINCHESTER (PAST 5-YEARS)

The City of Winchester provides career staffing for each of the privately-owned volunteer fire companies. Because of the collaborative and professional approach to providing state-of-the-art fire/EMS service to the City as well as surrounding areas, the Mayor, City Council and City Manager have provided additional support and funding for human and capital assets for the department and each of the volunteer fire companies (until recently, all equipment, apparatus, buildings and support have been the sole responsibility of the volunteer fire companies and their respective boards). Over the past 5-years these include,

but are not limited to:

- Recently updated salary scales based on regional data that addressed compression and increased entry level pay
- Purchase of a new 100' Aerial Ladder (Pierce) for the Rouss Volunteer Fire Company
- Contributions towards the construction of a new Burn Building to provide training opportunities for the City and surrounding region
- The establishment of an in-house paramedic certification program
- The purchase of two sets of turn out gear for every field operations personnel
- Investments into thermal imaging cameras and a public safety drone
- Fuel stipends for each fire station for apparatus



(\$20,000 per station)

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Winchester Fire Department Commitment to Their Customers

- Develop and execute a realistic, obtainable and sustainable long-range strategic plan for the department
- Provide the highest quality of service to the citizens and visitors
- Support and maintain a safe, healthy, well-trained workforce
- Be a community resource for life safety information and knowledge
- Attract and retain a qualified and diverse career and volunteer workforce
- Be accountable to our community for demonstrable results
- Be a recognized leader of a fire and rescue service that is dedicated to excellence
- Support the combination career and volunteer system
- Be innovative and proactive in our approach to community issues

- Believe in our role as stewards of public trust

Mission

To develop and deploy a coordinated service delivery mechanism through which the Community is provided public safety services in a professional and cost-effective manner. The mission will comprehensively address Emergency Communications, Fire, EMS, and Hazardous Materials Operations involving career and volunteer personnel, while coordinating operational and support functions with internal and external agencies and individuals.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FIRE CHIEF

GovHR USA interviewed various stakeholders in preparation for this recruitment.

- The next Fire Chief must continue the department's outreach to the corporate community working closely with them on emergency response and preventative measures in a public/private partnership environment.
- The Fire Chief in collaboration with the Emergency Management Coordinator must be current on key training associated with this critical public safety responsibility and partnership.
- The Fire Chief must be a state-of-the-art leader and manager, with the ability to connect and relate to department employees at all phases of their careers. The Chief should also be skilled in human resources management, understanding the administrative aspects of leading a multi-faceted department.
- Succession planning and the continued development of personnel, creating a vision of success for the organization will be a critical skill set of the next Fire Chief.
- The need to be mindful of the diversity of the City and the unique and varied cultural characteristics providing strong lines of communication and outreach.
- The need to create a diverse workforce and the development of strategies in a public safety environment to encourage and develop a future workforce from the community.
- Understanding and creating a vision for the fire department as new strategies for service delivery like Mobile Integrated Health Care, Vision 20/20 and other regional, state and national approaches to high functioning operations.
- Understanding and planning for capital asset management and funding.
- The next fire chief must demonstrate the skill sets necessary to manage a very diverse working environment (volunteer and career), establishing a collaborative strategic plan for operations for the next

5-10 years.

The Fire Chief position is a very visible member of the senior staff of the City of Winchester requiring well-developed leadership abilities and management skill sets that are based upon consensus building and problem-solving. Additionally, the Fire Chief must have a strong desire to work in a collegial, team-oriented environment. He/she must be a highly motivated, self-starting and confident individual with excellent, genuine and trustworthy interpersonal skills.

The City is seeking progressive Candidates committed to excellence in the delivery of fire, EMS and Emergency



Management services.

Certificates, Licenses, Registrations

Possession of a valid and appropriate driver's license. Possess and maintains valid and appropriate certificates for the following: Fire Officer – Level I, II, III, & IV NFPA 1403 Compliance Officer, NFA – Incident Safety Officer, Fire Instructor – Level I & II, Firefighter Level II, Emergency Medical Technician, Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (Level III), Driver Operator – Pumper AND Aerial, Mayday Firefighter Down and Hazardous Material Operations. Certificates must be available and recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Requirements specified in the NIMS compliance manual.

Additional Candidate Attributes

Innovation: Bring fresh ideas to the organization and offer unique perspectives and experiences.

Energy: Provide enthusiasm and focused energy to all projects and a passion for service to the community. Be one who can develop and articulate a long-term plan

for the Fire Department with the charisma to lead the Department to an even higher level of excellence. Be a highly motivated, visionary, goal-oriented leader with a proven ability to gain cooperation and communicate clear direction.

Versatility: Play an important role in coordinating, facilitating, and managing projects that require involvement across multiple service areas.

Leadership: Be dedicated to becoming an effective leader and building collaborative and positive relationships with other staff members and outside organizations in the region. Have an open, friendly personality and communication style and a calm demeanor; be one who can establish trust quickly with others along with a strong sense of humor.

Have in-depth understanding and a demonstrated record of utilizing modern technology, operation techniques, methods and practices relating to fire suppression, fire investigations, fire prevention and inspection, emergency medical service, hazardous materials, confined space rescue, training, public education, and administration/management in a progressive fire protection/service organization.

Have thorough knowledge of the principles of personnel management including recruiting, training, promoting, disciplining, and terminating employees within a fire service context.

Have knowledge of, and experience in, applying ordinances, laws, regulations, operating guidelines, safety standards, etc. that are applicable to a firefighting/emergency medical/rescue service and emergency preparedness.

Have experience in directing the preparation and presentation of a department budget and an understanding of the principles of government budgeting, recognizing the long-term cost implications of proposed, new programs; have familiarity with systems and metrics which measure the success and effectiveness of departmental programs.

Have experience with the full range of emergency services provided by progressive suburban fire departments as well as the ability to prepare the Department to meet the expectations of the City of Winchester City Council and City Management team.

Have a proven record of outreach and participation in the community; genuinely enjoy participation in community events, appearances at local civic organizations and casual contact with residents and businesses.

Have experience in developing positive, cooperative, and supportive relationships with other fire departments and agencies at the local, state, and federal level, as well as creating partnerships with other public and private entities that can better utilize shared resources.

Have experience in developing positive, cooperative, and supportive relationships with other City Departments; be very comfortable with a close working relationship with police and other emergency management personnel.

Have a record of continuous professional training and education for self and departmental staff as well as keeping up to date and abreast of industry 'best practices' and 'cutting edge' management techniques, current trends and tools.

Have management experience in creating an environment of trust and integrity where employees respect one another and where the Department consistently functions at a high level of customer service.

Have sufficient experience and ability to accurately evaluate operational performance, adequacy of staffing and appropriateness of organizational structure toward superior performance.

Have a demonstrated ability to provide strategic leadership and long-range planning practices, particularly in succession planning; understand the skills and abilities of existing personnel to maximize the talent and expertise of the workforce.

Have a demonstrated record of success in employee supervision and management, treating employees and volunteers in an open, fair, and supportive manner; be comfortable working in and developing an environment of trust, knowing when to assist employees and when to permit employees to work independently. Meets with employees and volunteers on a regular basis with the goal of establishing collaborative working environments.

Be skilled at mentoring and leading a changing organization, with the ability to assist employees newly promoted to command positions; and possess the ability to formally and informally monitor the morale of the organization as turnover occurs and new command staff members are appointed.

Have proven verbal communication skills, both one-on-one and in a public speaking venue, treating everyone in

a professional and respectful manner; can make effective presentations before the City Council; possess strong public relations experience. Excellent writing skills. Ability to read and comprehend laws and policies. Ability to write documents of all types using proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Have complete personal and professional integrity, gaining respect and inspiring the trust and confidence of subordinates, co-workers, and elected and appointed officials, as well as the general public.

Have the maturity and professional stature to project a strong professional and personal presence that will quickly establish credibility and gain respect within the Fire Department, the City, and with the regional area.

Be a strong advocate for the Fire Department who clearly represents the needs of the Department to the Common Council, City Manager, and to the community along with strong lines of regular and effective communications.

Have a passion for the fire/EMS service from both an internal, department standpoint and for service to the community; be devoted to customer service—both internal and external.

Has the ability to develop creative and innovative methods towards marketing and celebrating the success of the fire department.

Can delegate while requiring accountability from all personnel in the Fire Department regarding quality, accuracy and timeliness of overall department services and programs, striving for excellence in the fire/EMS service.

Set high standards of performance, productivity, and initiative by Departmental personnel; be comfortable in recommending and administering disciplinary actions if necessary.

Can attract, develop, motivate and retain highly qualified professional staff with a focus on diversity; be a mentor.

Provide positive and frequent recognition where appropriate for a job well done; foster an environment where employees are empowered to take calculated risks in the performance of their duties.

Is required to be a non-tobacco user.