

Dennis R. Sparks, MBA

[REDACTED], den830@aol.com [REDACTED]

January 4, 2019

Via electronic submittal to:
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com

Mr. Doug Thomas, Senior Vice-President
Strategic Government Resources

Re: City of Palm Coast, FL City Manager's position

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I am excited to submit my credentials for consideration for the position of City Manager for the City of Palm Coast, FL. As outlined in the attached resume, I have a strong background leading teams and achieving results in a fast-paced environment with competing priorities. The vibrancy and professional reputation of the City of Palm Coast is the reason I am so interested in this position. I am confident that my organizational and leadership abilities and background in developing strong relationships built on integrity, honesty and transparency is a great fit for what you are working to achieve.

With more than 30 years governmental experience including county administrator and city manager, my strengths include being organized, public management, aviation, human resources, intergovernmental relations, public relations, negotiating contracts, economic development, strategic planning, finance and budgeting. My leadership qualities include having a transparent, collaborative and team oriented management style. My community involvement includes having served as an Advisor to Planning Commissions and Economic Development Authorities and Board Member on two Chambers of Commerce.

Taking on the challenge of "crisis manager" in some of the more interesting places in the country, I managed cities and counties where they did not want to keep managers and in which other managers did not want to work. As such, I went into the localities, created teamwork, resolved their problems and moved on to the next opportunity. I worked in highly diversified environments and helped bring one municipality from near bankruptcy to a bond rating of "A3". Having managed diverse urban, suburban, rural, tourist, historical, mountain, and desert local governments, I take pride in getting the job done on time and within budget. I also served as an Adjunct Professor of Marketing for Virginia Commonwealth University which proved to be valuable in developing a solid record of obtaining economic development. My experience includes managing up to 12 department heads and 366 employees. I prepared state, city and county budgets up to \$45 million, and served as Personnel Director, Finance Director and Economic Development Director. During 2015, after 36 years, ICMA awarded me "Life Member" status. I have broad experience in human resource management and have written policies and performance planning and evaluation systems.

My focus is on strategic priorities and developing a culture of making informed, long term, data driven decisions. The strategic planning process is critical to establishing goals and communicating the priorities throughout the entire organization. It is important to communicate how every employee is a valuable link in achieving our results. We work hard to measure results, communicate progress and celebrate success.

I have a passion for governmental management and the important work done despite budgetary constraints. I believe in working closely with stakeholders and the employees to provide the best service possible for our residents, businesses and all who visit our community. I believe I am well prepared for the challenges and opportunities facing the City of Palm Coast. Please feel free to contact me to discuss the position with you.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Sparks

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Enc.

(References upon request)

Dennis R. Sparks, MBA

den830@aol.com

Experience Summary – 30+ years

With more than 30 years of experience, I served as a crisis manager and county administrator in Virginia and Nevada, and city manager in Ohio, Illinois, and Texas. My experience includes public management, aviation, team building, personnel, finance, performance management, economic development, purchasing, & budgeting. My management style is collaborative and one of Team Leader/Facilitator, while remaining visible and keeping my employer fully informed.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SPARKS CONSULTING Hopewell, Virginia December 2005 – Present
Management & Aviation Consultant (2308 Jackson Street, Hopewell, VA 23860) 804-458-7393 \$72,000
Located 25 miles south of Richmond, consulting services are offered to governmental and private sector employers and aviation companies.

Key Accomplishments:

- Provide management, insurance benefits and aviation consulting services. Mentoring, facilitating, training.
- Consult with local govts. and companies in budget, organization development, finance, aviation and insurance.
- Write policies, train employees and teach aviation.
- FAA Safety Team Representative – teach aviation safety; train pilots.
- Licensed by the FAA and Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Recipient of the FAA’s most prestigious Wright Brothers “Master Pilot” Award in 2018.

CITY OF SILSBEE Hardin County, Texas July 2005 – October 2005
Population: 6,500 - Employees: 65 - Budget: \$3.7 million

City Manager TX (105 S. 3rd St., Silsbee, TX 77656) 409-385-2863 Herbert Muckleroy, Mayor \$75,000
This East Texas city, located 21 miles north of Beaumont, has a population of 6,500, 6 department heads and 65 employees with a budget of \$3.7 million. The city is located in the low lying country known as the “Piney Woods”. Reported to a 5-member City Council. The city had a history of City Manager turnover, was \$2 million in debt and hired me after the budget deadline. Hurricane Rita hit the city in 2005. After completing the budget and the Hurricane was over, I was terminated. The Council combined the positions of Police Chief and City Manager and gave the job to the long time Police Chief.

Key Accomplishments:

- Managed the City government. Pop. 6,500.
- Supervised police, fire, finance, personnel, library, and public works.
- Prepared the city’s first 5-year budget (\$3.75 million operating and capital budgets).
- Proposed and implemented a surveillance system for the city jail.

COUNTY OF LANDER Battle Mountain, Nevada November 2003 – April 2004
Population: 5,775 - Employees: 25 - Budget: \$2.8 million

Executive Director (315 S. Humboldt St., Battle Mountain, NV 89820) 775-635-5738 Gladys Burris, Clk \$55,000
An Old West county in the “High Desert” of Northern Nevada (elevation of 4,536 feet), Interstate 80 runs east and west through the county from Salt Lake City to Reno. Lander County, NV has a population of 5,775. Battle Mountain, about half way between Salt Lake and Reno, is the county seat with a population of about 3,500 and has an airport (“BAM”) that is the scene of many automobile TV commercials. The county projects were to improve the BAM airport facilities, and control mosquitoes. Reported to a 3-member Board of County Commissioners. Temporary. For the remaining three years of their term, the Board unofficially reverted to a Commission form and did not hire a Manager.

Key Accomplishments:

- Managed the county government administration and two county airports. Pop. 5,775. “High Desert” of N.n NV.
- Supervised 5 dept. heads including finance, HR, community development, social services and senior services.
- Worked with the Airport Consulting Engineer and FAA to expand airport facilities at the “BAM” airport.
- Hired an independent contractor to control the mosquitos.

VILLAGE OF MAYWOOD

Cook County, Illinois

October 2002 – October 2003

Population: 28,000 - Employees: 185 - Budget: \$28 million

Village Manager

(40 Madison St., Maywood, IL 60153) 708-269-3510 Larry Gates, DPW

\$100,000

Chief Executive Officer for dynamic, diverse and historic community in the Chicago area with 28,000 residents. Reported to a seven member Village Board of Trustees and managed a budget of \$28 million, with 8 department heads with 185 employees. Maywood is a culturally diverse community in Cook county that had experienced decaying infrastructure, financial problems, high crime and a loss in residents. The Village had 24 Managers in 18 years. I was the 4th Manager hired in a 12 month period. Completed my contract.

Key Accomplishments:

- Managed this home-rule village of 28,000 in the Chicago area and performed liaison duties with businesses.
- Managed total government operations, budget preparation and labor negotiations.
- Established a drug testing program.
- Supervised 8 dept. heads with 185 employees including police, fire, public works, finance, HR, code enforcement, parks & recreation & community development. (SEIU, ICOPS, Teamsters, and Police Benevolent League)
- Prepared a balanced \$28M budget.
- Upgraded the Village from near bankruptcy to a bond rating of “A3”.
- Reduced the crime rate approximately 12% in a Village with corruption, rampant crime and six drug gangs.
- Increased the security of the public water system.
- Established a Performance Planning & Evaluation system, updated job descriptions.
- Improved efficiency of the Board’s agenda package.
- Obtained 8 new businesses.

CITY OF TRENTON

Butler County, Ohio

August 2001 – February 2002

Population: 9,500 - Employees: 32 - Budget: \$6.5 million

City Manager

(11 E. State St., Trenton , OH 45067) 513-988-9619

\$67,600

Served as City Manager of Trenton reporting to a 7 member City Council. Trenton is located about 35 miles north of Cincinnati and has a population of 9,500; 4 department heads and 32 employees. Significant projects included annexing more land into the city; providing security for the water system; and improving recreational facilities.

Key Accomplishments:

- Managed this city of 9,500 with an annual budget of \$6.5 million; budget preparation and labor negotiations
- Supervised 4 department heads with 32 employees including police, fire, public works and personnel.
- Annexed 12 property parcels with 240 acres, increased the tax base 25%. Successful economic development.
- Installed fencing and security systems around the city water tower.
- Paved a track around an athletic field; constructed picnic facilities and two basketball courts.
- Secured the municipal facilities during the 9-11 disaster.

CITY OF MORAINE

Montgomery County, Ohio

May 2000 - November 2000

Population: 7,500 night, 33,000 day - Employees: 366 - Budget: \$26 million

City Manager (4200 Dryden Rd., Moraine, OH 45439) 937-535-1002 \$78,000

As City Manager, reported to a 7- member City Council. Population of 7,500 residents; 11 department heads with 366 employees and a budget of \$26 million. Moraine is 6 miles south of the City of Dayton, OH and was a General Motors factory city where GM Oldsmobile Bravada SUVs were manufactured. Major projects included the construction of a \$3.7 million regional water park and recreation facility with an indoor basketball court, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a wave pool, and meeting rooms. Other projects included recreational programs for seniors and a fishing pond with picnic facilities; and economic development. Known as a politically volatile city, I was the fourth of six City Managers in one year, serving six months.

Key Accomplishments:

- Managed this General Motors factory city of 7,500 (33,000 day) with an annual budget of \$26 million.
- Responsible for budget preparation, contract and labor negotiations. Mediator, conflict resolution.
- Supervised 12 dept. heads with 366 employees (150 FT, 37 PT, 114 seasonal, 65 youth corps.) including personnel, purchasing, information technology, police, fire, fire/rescue, street dept. & city garage (PW), large parks & recreation dept., building inspection & code enforcement., economic development, engineering and maintenance.
- As City Manager I was also the Zoning Administrator and Advisor to the Planning Commission.
- Completed construction of a new \$3.7 million recreation center and wave-pool (water park).
- Successful economic development. Nurtured new business development and business retention.
- Served as hearings officer and resolved union grievances. (FOP, IAFF, AFSCME).

COUNTY OF LOUISA

Louisa, Virginia

May 1999 - November 1999

Population: 24,000 - Employees: 169 - Budget: \$45 million

Acting County Administrator /Finance Director (P.O. Box 160, Louisa, VA 23093) 540-894-7407 \$55,000

Acting County Administrator and Director of Finance for this county of 24,000 between Richmond and Charlottesville. Reported to a 7-member Board of Supervisors and supervised 9 department heads with 169 employees. \$45 million budget.

Key Accomplishments:

- Managed all aspects of this county of 24,000 with an annual budget of \$45 million.
- As Finance Director prepared the \$45 million budget for all county operations and the school board.
- Served as Personnel Director – conducted a salary survey and made recommendations to the Board.
- Supervised 9 dept. heads with 169 employees including finance, personnel, public works, parks & recreation, MIS, EMS, buildings & grounds, animal control, landfill, refuse sites, economic development, Grants Writer, office on youth services, planning & zoning, and building inspections.
- Also served as Finance Director, Personnel Director, Purchasing Director, Zoning Administrator and as Advisor to the Planning Commission, and the Industrial Development Authority.

STATE OF VIRGINIA, DOC HQ

Richmond, Virginia

February 1992 – May 1999

Population of VA: 8,001,024 - DOC Employees: 11,760 - DOC Budget: \$1.046 billion

Fiscal Officer (6900 Atmore Dr., Richmond, VA 23225) 804-674-3520 \$50,000

- *Fiscal Officer – Asst. Financial Reporting Manager*, Department of Corrections. Managed special financial projects. Supervised a staff of Accountants analyzing operations for 38 major prisons. Supervised accounts payable for the construction of 5 new prisons. Participated in audits of the business offices in major prisons. During two months leave of absence, in 1999, served as the first City Administrator for the City of Shawano, WI. Transferred, by legislative action, from the Parole Board to the Department of Corrections on July 1, 1995. 11,769 FTEs.

- *Fiscal Officer – Director, Finance & Administration* for the Virginia Parole Board. Advised and assisted the Parole Board Chairman. Managed budgeting, accounting, human resources, purchasing, and administrative support functions. Served as the agency's Fiscal and Personnel Officer. Prepared and administered the agency's \$2.5 million annual budget using IBM compatible personal computers using Microsoft Word and Excel and on-line mainframe connections to the state system. Created, organized, and became Captain of the state's first interagency Emergency Medical Services Response Team. The two agencies worked closely together in the same building.

SPARKS MEDIA, INC.

Bowling Green, Virginia

January 1984 – December 1992

Management Consultant

out of business

\$48,000

- President & Management Consultant. Provided management consulting services in the public & private arenas
- Trained employees in complying with government regulations and building successful organizations.
- Developed and copyrighted a commercial OSHA HazCom training video and sold to governmental entities nationally.
- Government - Obtained four economic development prospects for a county in 1985
- Obtained a FEMA grant for a WVA city.

COUNTY OF WASHINGTON

Abingdon, Virginia

November 1981 – January 1984

Population: 72,000 - Employees: 270 - Budget: \$30 million

County Administrator

205 Academy Drive, Abingdon, VA 24210

\$35,000

Managed this county with a population 72,000, including a city of 25,000, in a SMA area of 250,000 people, with an annual growth rate of 27%. Supervised 12 department heads with 270 employees. Implemented Board policies, and enforced ordinances. Prepared the annual county budget in excess of \$30 million. As County Administrator I was also the Zoning Administrator, Advisor to the Planning Commission, Advisor to the Industrial Development Authority, and an Airport Commissioner for the Virginia Highlands Airport Commission. Full range of local government services, including: accounting; purchasing; legal services; building inspection; planning & zoning; emergency services; parks & recreation; animal control; cannery; personnel; code enforcement; airport; library; water & sewer; economic development; and social services.

Key Accomplishments:

- Very successful in economic development, with over \$45 million in revenue bonds issued in a single year.
- Streamlined the accounting & budgetary systems;
- Established the county's first Central Accounting, Central Purchasing, and Services departments.
- Wrote & implemented the county's first pay & classification system and performance evaluation system.

COUNTY OF PAGE

Luray, Virginia

November 1978 – May 1980

Population: 20,000 - Employees: 35 - Budget: \$17.5 million

County Administrator

(Luray, VA, Court Street . Luray, VA 22835)

\$20,000

Served as the first County Administrator for this scenic Shenandoah Valley county in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Population 20,000. This county is the heart of tourism in the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Implemented Board policies and prepared agendas. As County Administrator I was also the Personnel Officer, Zoning Administrator, Advisor to the Planning Commission, Advisor to the Industrial Development Authority, Director of Emergency Services, and a Board Member on the Lord Fairfax Emergency Medical Services Council. Supervised six department heads with 30 employees.

Key Accomplishments:

- Organized county administrative operations.
- Prepared the county's annual budget and managed capital improvements.
- Wrote the first personnel policy.
- Officially represented the governing body in public and media relations and to the community, state legislative committees, and other governmental and corporate officials.
- Successful in economic development and water and sewer projects for residential and commercial communities.
- Community involvement with the Rotary, Ruritan, Kiwanis, Lions, Professional Women's Business, and 4-H Clubs, Chamber of Commerce, and High School government classes.

Education

MBA – Business Administration & Finance, Virginia Commonwealth Univ.(VCU), 1976 – 3.8 GPA - Top 3%

BS - Business & Law, Virginia Commonwealth Univ.(VCU), 1974 – 3.8 GPA - High Honors

AS – Business Administration, John Tyler Community College (JTCC), 1973 – 3.8 GPA - Magna Cum Laude

AS – Teaching, John Tyler Community College Community College (JTCC), 1973 – 3.8 GPA - Magna Cum Laude

ATP – Airline Transport Pilot; CFII – “Gold Seal” Certified Flight Instructor, Instruments; Seaplane Instructor;
MEI – Multiengine Instructor

GI-BAI – Ground Instructor, Basic, Advanced & Instruments; Remote Pilot – sUAS (Drones)

Benefits: Insurance Licenses – Life & Health – Commonwealth of Virginia, CE updated – 2018

Continuing Education: insurance, aviation, management development, finance, personnel, purchasing, computer software.

Honors & Awards

Omicron Delta Epsilon – International Honor Society in Economics for Graduate Students, VCU

Delta Sigma Pi Scholarship Award – for graduating first in the School of Business, VCU

High Honors – VCU; Magna Cum Laude, JTCC; 3.8 GPA at both, JTCC & VCU.

“Who’s Who in American Junior Colleges”; “Who’s Who in American Aviation”.

Court Referred “Mediator” – fmr. certified by Virginia Supreme Court

Author: “Virginia Gentlemen”, “Your Right to Know”, et. al.

FAA “Gold Seal” Flight Instructor, Instruments

FAA Wright Brothers “Master Pilot” Award

Present & Past Professional Affiliations

International City/County Management Association (ICMA) named Life Member with over 36 years.

Ohio & Texas City Mgmt. Associations (OCMA & TCMA)

Captain/Senior Pilot, USAF Auxiliary, FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam) Representative

Previously held Private Investigator’s license; and EMT certificate in Virginia

Past Officer – Chesterfield County Police Department, VA

Past Member – Florida Peace Officers Association

Member – Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)

“Aviation Ambassador”, Virginia Dept. of Aviation.

Veteran: United States Air Force (Vietnam era)

Community Involvement Experience

Advisor – seven Planning Commissions
Advisor – seven Economic Development Authorities
Director – Economic Development Authority
Director – Emergency Services
Director – Human Resources
Director - Finance
Airport Commissioner – Virginia Highlands Airport Commission
Member – Executive Committee – two Chambers of Commerce
Board Member – Lord Fairfax Emergency Medical Services Council (serving five counties in VA)
Created & became Captain of Virginia’s first state “Interagency Emergency Medical Services Team” (VPB & DOC)
American Red Cross CPR and First Aid Instructor
EMT – three Virginia Volunteer Rescue Squads
Representative – FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam)
Captain – Civil Air Patrol (USAF Auxiliary)
Boy Scout Advisor - Government
Speaker: Rotary, Ruritan, Kiwanis, Lions, Professional Women's Business, and 4-H Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, and High School government classes

Department Heads Supervised

Supervised police, fire, rescue, emergency services, code enforcement, building inspection, animal control, finance, legal services, grants management, human resources, purchasing, information technology, public works, landfill, engineering, planning & zoning, parks & recreation, community development, county cannery, social services, senior services, youth services, airports and library.