

Agenda Report



MEETING DATE: Tuesday, August 27, 2024

TO: City Council

FROM: DEPUTY CITY MANAGER MANNING

**SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF TAMARA VIDES AS CITY MANAGER AND
APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR EMPLOYMENT**

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution appointing Tamara Vides as City Manager and approving a contract between the City of Watsonville and Tamara Vides for employment as City Manager; and authorizing the Mayor to execute the Employment Contract.

BACKGROUND:

Former City Manager Rene Mendez resigned in May 2024 to become the City Manager of Salinas. After receiving and reviewing several proposals, the City Council awarded a contract to Ralph Andersen and Associates to conduct an executive recruitment to fill the City Manager position.

DISCUSSION:

Ralph Andersen and Associates, led by consultant Fred Wilson, conducted an extensive search for candidates who met the characteristics and qualifications desired in a City Manager for the City of Watsonville. The position was widely advertised, and 17 applications were received. The consultant conducted preliminary interviews and recommended seven candidates to the City Council as the most competitive candidates for consideration.

The City Council narrowed down the candidate pool and invited five candidates to interview, ultimately selecting Tamara Vides based on her extensive experience with the City of Watsonville and her qualifications for the position. Ms. Vides started her career with the City of Watsonville over twenty-six years ago and has held various positions in the organization, ultimately advancing to Assistant City Manager in 2020. Ms. Vides has also served as interim Parks and Community Services Director, interim Public Works and Utilities Director, and is currently serving as Interim City Manager for the second time. Ms. Vides has a Master of Science in Recreation Management and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

The terms of the proposed Employment Agreement include, among other terms, a base salary of \$281,000 per year with a six percent increase within six months if a satisfactory performance review is received. The contract also provides for a \$10,000 annual contribution to deferred compensation and the ability to cash out up to 100 hours of accrued vacation time within three months of the execution of the agreement. Furthermore, she will be eligible for the benefits as outlined in the Executive Team Compensation and Benefits Plan, which include health, life, and disability insurance; administrative, vacation, and sick leave; and holidays. The contract includes annual performance reviews, at which time the City Council may consider cost of living and salary adjustments.

Either party may terminate without cause upon providing a sixty-day notice. The City may terminate for cause for the specific reasons set forth in the Employment Agreement by providing her with a written notice of termination, which shall be effective immediately. If employment is terminated and severance pay is applicable per the contract, the employee will receive a cash payment equal to nine (9) months of base salary.

If approved, Ms. Vides' contract will be effective on August 28, 2024.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The appointment of a City Manager supports all aspects of the Strategic Plan, but specifically Goal 7-Efficient and High Performing Government.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The proposed salary and benefits for this position exceed the current budget allocation by \$21,000 for this fiscal year. We will cover this increase by reallocating funds from other line items within the city manager's budget.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The City Council could elect not to move forward with this appointment.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

None.