Employment Opportunity

Village Manager

Village of Quincy
Quincy, Mich. is a small community with a big personality and an even bigger heart! Sitting on the border Michigan shares with Indiana and Ohio in the midst of Amish country, Quincy offers an excellent opportunity for an energetic, hands-on administrator with a desire to be involved in every aspect of the business while setting a course straight ahead for the future.

Proud of its midwestern roots and small-town lifestyle, Quincy’s residents value a way of life where the pace may be less frenetic, but volunteers are high-energy and neighbors care for each other. This is a desirable community where homes are often purchased by transplants “sight unseen”; the downtown hosts locally owned businesses and colorful murals; the tax base is diverse; and the unemployment rate is low. Quincy is looking for a new village manager for the first time in 15 years.

It is a politically civil, full-service village established as a council-manager form of government by ordinance. The workforce of 11 full-time employees, supported by contractors and shared-service agreements, provides municipal services to over 1,650 residents in this community of just over 1.24 square miles.

The village assesses 11.543 mills for operating and another 4.615 mills for streets on a taxable value of over $50,185,000 ($17,772,430 is industrial/commercial). The general fund budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year is $1,090,484 and the total budget approved for the year, including enterprise funds, was $3,006,037.

Public servants who understand and appreciate the small-town way of life and governance would be the best fit for the community. Quincy is seeking a visionary individual who can see how all the pieces fit together to build a new picture of the future and who is flexible and adaptable enough to grab hold of opportunities when they come. Quincy will offer a competitive compensation package including benefits and a starting salary within the range of $64,000 to $74,000 that will be negotiable, depending on the qualifications and experience of the chosen executive.
THE COMMUNITY

Quincy, with its 1650+, residents, is known throughout its environs as a safe, friendly, small community with beautiful neighborhoods and a family-centric vibe. But, never equate small with sleepy when it comes to this town! While some of its families go back generations, residents have no intention of standing still. A rare sense of pro-community passion drives continual improvement here, one hometown project after another.

Quincy offers much to attract a community builder with a desire to be involved in every part of the municipal business and a need to make a difference. We have a great location, a home town way of life, a hard-working, friendly, open citizenry; a supportive staff, and motivated elected officials.

The village is located in Michigan’s Branch County which rests on both the Indiana and Ohio borders mid-way between Chicago and Detroit on the U.S. 12 Heritage Route, and a one-hour drive from Fort Wayne, Ind. or Lansing and Kalamazoo, MI=ich.

Branch County calls itself Coldwater County https://www.coldwatercountry.com/, home to over 100 inland lakes, making it a magnet for boaters, campers, anglers, and any manner of water recreation enthusiasts. On Quincy’s southern edge is the 60-acre Marble Lake County Park, which opens onto a 13-mile chain of lakes. Within minutes from the village are 24 golf courses, the All-American Capri Drive-In movie theatre and the Tibbits Opera House, one of the oldest continuously operating community theaters in the country. Multi-mile hiking/biking trails traverse the county and are popular color tour routes in the fall.

Quincy is buffered by crop agriculture, dairy farms, horse ranches, and Amish family enterprises on all sides. The village serves as the downtown and community center for its rural neighbors, a picturesque haven with an easy commute of other nightlife options and major urban job markets in Jackson, Battle Creek, and Kalamazoo.

This is the quintessential hometown. Victorian architecture in a walkable downtown filled with businesses that treat customers like old friends. Neighborhoods with 100-year-old trees and tidy front porches where children walk to school just down the block and people take care of each other. The Village Park invites gathering around the outdoor stage, the skate park, or winter sledding hill. This fall, as a thank you to the first responders who often come to their aid, the Amish community hosted a community dinner to raise funds for the area volunteer fire department.
A palpable feeling of optimism that “we can do this” mixed with hometown pride and genuine concern leads to big things here. When the school district needed a new softball field that wasn’t in the budget, locals financed it and built it with volunteer labor. A desire to enhance recreation opportunities for village and township kids has led to a community-wide effort to construct a new multi-use outdoor facility.

By combining churches, civic partners, a strong downtown business community, and highly involved individuals, Quincy is able to host several annual events and attractions - proof of its vitality and creative fundraising talent. This year’s Pints in the Park attracted over 1,000 visitors and engaged 125 volunteers to raise funds for community projects. Kids Day in the Park is accompanied by donated bike giveaways. Volunteers are the backbone of the community band, the museum, and other parties hosted by area fans of the village including Thursday Music in the Park, the Main Street Festival, Quincy Lights, Hot Boat Races, and the Tip-Up Festival.

It could be the combination of the rural atmosphere and collective energy that is making Quincy a choice for hopeful transplants. The cost of living is low (76.2 out of 100) and housing stock is architecturally diverse and affordable, but in high demand. Neighborhoods are stable and well-kept. Rehab seems to be occurring on every other block. Approximately 60 percent of all homes are owner-occupied. The median house value in 2016 was $84,715 and the mean sale price was $100,981.

The school district is an attractor as well. Quincy Community Schools (https://quincyschools.org) boasts the highest cumulative SAT scores of any district in the county and leads “school of choice” recruitment with 100 new transfers this academic year alone. The district’s Facebook page gets 100,000 views per month.

Nearly 1,500 students are educated on one campus close to the downtown, further encouraging the family-centric environment. The County’s Head Start program is hosted there as well.

The district’s 13th year program provides a way for students to graduate with a high school diploma and a technical certificate, an associate degree, or 60 credits to transfer to a four-year institution. The dual enrollment option allows for simultaneous enrollment at Quincy High and Kellogg Community College. The new on-line blended learning alternative provides an interactive learning environment through technology for students in grades 5 through 12.
Adult learners have many options as well, and over 90 percent of Quincy residents have a high school diploma or above. With five miles, students can reach a satellite campus of Balker College and Kellogg Community College. Ten colleges of universities are less than an hour away including: Western Michigan University, Spring Arbor, Albion College, Hillsdale College, Trine University, Jackson College, Kellogg Community College, Sienna Heights University, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and Northwest State Community College in Ohio. Michigan State University is an hour away.

Quincy's denizens are welcoming, open, and tolerant of each other and newcomers. They are vocal about the issues that are important to them and committed to “the cause”. There is a do-it-yourself attitude here that informs their unsurpassed generosity to and reliance upon each other. They are close-knit and supportive of their hometown businesses and local government.

They are a hard-working group representing a diversity of income strata and occupations. The median age is just over 34 (younger than the statewide median of 39.7) and the unemployment rate is less than that of the rest of the state. Common professions include production and metal workers, with supervisors and management the third most reported occupation sector. The local industrial park houses several significant employers including Speedrack, EAB Fabrication, Parrish Excavating, and Star of the West Milling.
Quincy is a General Law Village as identified by the Michigan constitution and, as such, is governed by a village council and village president. The Council is made up of six, at-large, non-partisan council members serving staggered four-year terms. The village president is independently elected to a four-year term and is named as the chief executive officer of the legislative body.

Villages in Michigan can assign administrative duties to an appointed manager and Quincy has done so by ordinance. Consequently, the village functions like a council/manager form of government where the council, as a whole, sets policy and direction; approves the budget and major expenditures; and serves as the legislative authority through the approval of ordinances and major initiatives. The village manager reports to the council, proposing the budgets, projects and coordinating and evaluating all activities of all departments. All department directors report to the village manager.

The village manager serves as zoning administrator. Quincy and Quincy Township, the jurisdiction that surrounds the village, share a planning commission and zoning board of appeals.

The council is stable, civil, collaborative, and thoughtful in their deliberations. They are engaged, attentive, and to take the work, but not themselves, too seriously. The elected officials are supportive of employees and committed to moving the community forward.

Quincy provides a full-range of municipal services through employees, contracted providers, and intergovernmental partners. Eleven full-time employees staff the departments of police (supported by 8 part-time reserve officers), clerk/treasurer, street, and utilities (water and wastewater). Fire protection is provided by a three-government authority and the library is part of the county-wide district. Assessing and building inspection services are supplied by Branch County. A part-time special projects/events coordinator also assists the DDA and the Quincy Chamber Board.
Department directors are experienced, trusted, well-respected, and intimately integrated into the community through their own wide-ranging volunteerism. This is an outcome-based group, comfortable with adaptation, who have mastered moving in a unified direction. They are highly collaborative and often work in each other’s lanes to get the day’s job done. Everyone knows the mission. We work for the residents and we’ll keep playing ball until the last person leaves the field.

Employees are open, face-to-face communicators, well-informed, and aware of the community’s challenges and prospects. They meet formally twice per month to plan review progress, and discuss council direction. Meetings are casual, often accompanied by food!

The team is tight both at work and beyond. They are loyal, confident in each other, and unafraid of telling the truth. It is a positive and optimistic working environment where members are funny and warm. Training and professional growth is encouraged. The village likes to build succession from the inside.

To add value to this organization, the new village manager will be the expert on state and federal regulation/laws and their impact on the village. He or she will bring to the table abilities in driving economic and residential growth and take charge of getting a unified message out to residents while marketing the community.

This team’s leader will be proactive, community-minded, confident, and fair, with an ability to say no. They will be capable of wearing many hats, jumping in, seeking advice, trusting the employees, and building relationships.
The incoming village manager will find the following opportunities and challenges awaiting their attention in the Village of Quincy, in no particular order:

# OPPORTUNITIES

The school district is attracting new families who may be looking to relocate to Quincy, which could add to population growth.

A downtown with diverse and interesting architecture supports the surrounding area with a wide variety of enterprises. Residents are committed to the “shop local” mantra and strongly support the local business community. Grant funds have been secured to outfit the classic downtown with upper-level rental housing conversions, and a façade improvement program is in place. Excitement is building around Market 1858, which will create mini-chalet space for retail entrepreneurs. Vacant land is available for residential development.

A strong and healthy community foundation as well as an active volunteer base is available to support the community’s initiatives for growth and success.

While the city is landlocked, attractive development opportunities are still available through reuse of vacant factories, a closed school site, or obsolete buildings downtown. Vacant land on South Michigan Avenue has a Commercial Rehabilitation District in place.

# CHALLENGES

Quincy’s residents and elected officials have long wish lists, a relatively small millage rate, and a debt load. They see limited revenue options open to them. A long-term plan to bring income and development needs into sync will be needed.

The community perceives a demand for housing that cannot be met by the existing stock. The 2008 economic downturn created opportunities for the conversion of single-owner homes to rentals, pushing the percent of owner-occupied homes to below where the village is comfortable. Sporadic blight in neighborhoods is beginning to trouble residents as well. And, with almost no vacancies, particularly in the area of middle-income homes, population growth may be restricted.

The quaint and attractive downtown appears to be underutilized and progress has slowed. Some first-floor units are being used for private storage.

# IMMEDIATE GOALS/ISSUES OF INTEREST

Several projects are already in line. The local Rotary Club is financing an in-village hiking/biking trail that may eventually connect to a larger linear system. The manager will assist in facilitating completion of that project.

The new manager will tackle completion of Market 1858, a concept for expanding affordable retail space through the construction of mini-chalets for pop-up entrepreneurs.

The community is eagerly awaiting leadership to solidify partners, volunteers, and funding to move on with building an outdoor youth recreational facility.

The new manager will also concentrate on the next strategic steps to push forward Quincy’s brand as an active, vibrant, and enviable small town.
THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Village of Quincy will only consider applicants who are inherently interested in being an active member of an involved community. Applicants must be approachable, accessible, and comfortable in a small-town environment. To be considered minimally qualified, respondents must subscribe to the highest ethical standards and will have:

- Bachelor’s degree in a relevant field of study such as Public Administration, Business Administration or Finance AND
- Multiple years of direct work experience in local government (village, city, county, town, or township with professional municipal service delivery) with a career trajectory culminating in a leadership position with supervisory and budgetary responsibility AND
- Proven involvement in and knowledge of a wide range of municipal operations and functions, AND
- A history of community or public/nonprofit volunteerism
- An appropriate combination of education, professional certifications, and years of professional governmental experience may be considered when applying tests for minimum requirements
- Membership in a professional local government association that incorporates a code of ethics and continuous learning such as ICMA, MME, or equivalent is desirable

Any applicant who moves to the level of candidate will have time and project management skills with an ability to juggle multiple tasks. He or she will have the ability to research, comprehend, translate, and apply state and federal regulations that impact local government functions. Among the skills that are to be illustrated in a resume and letter of introduction are these:

- Solid aptitude for municipal finance/budgeting; ability to forecast revenue and project expenditures
- Background in zoning and understanding of planning concepts; manager is zoning administrator
- Confirmed interpersonal, written, and presentations skills; capable of effectively communicating with council; capable of crafting public messages to inform, engage, and market/promote the community
- Significant understanding of community and economic development concepts including residential housing development, tax base growth, business support and development
- Ability to build and support a well-performing employee team; identify and develop talent; familiarity with compensation and benefit structures helpful
- Capable of building cooperative relationships and partnerships among other governmental units, non-profits, businesses, and volunteer groups
- Competence with acquisition and management of grant funds
- Familiar with multiple municipal services, particularly police and fire operations
- Tech savvy

The new village manager will be resourceful and innovative; an optimist, looking for options and seeing solutions. He or she will be a humble and inspirational role model willing to jump in and help whenever needed. This new leader will build relationships, treat everyone fairly and equitably regardless of position or status, and must be:

- Adaptable and flexible; able to move through chaos, conflict, and change
- Visionary; sees the big picture and how things are connected
- Resourceful and innovative; sees options
- Easily accessible, approachable, can comfortably talk with anyone
- Creative thinker
- Humble
- Fair and open-minded, tolerant, understanding
- Can work with diverse personalities
- Inspirational role model
- Community-minded
- Capable of wearing many hats; willing to jump in and help when needed
- Transparent, truthful, honest, says what means
- Diplomatic
- Driven, ambitious
- Willing to learn
- Thick-skinned
APPLICATION PROCESS

APPLY BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS November 15, 2019

Please submit resume, cover letter, consent form, and five professional references to:

Email:
execsearch@mml.org, Subject Line: Quincy Search

-OR-

Mail:
Michigan Municipal League,
ATTN: Quincy Search,
1675 Green Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Questions can be directed to MML Executive Recruiter Kathie Grinzinger at kgringizner@mml.org.

Candidates desiring confidentiality of their interest, as allowed for and provided by Michigan law, must indicate such in a separate subject line above the body of the cover letter.

This search is conducted by an Equal Opportunity Employer.