

**AGENDA**

**Committee of the Whole Meeting  
Water District No. 1 of Johnson County  
February 7, 2023  
6:30 PM**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Review Evaluation Process for Executive Search Firm Presentations – Kay Heley and Janet Barrow, Ed.D.**
  - a. Preliminary Scorecards (retain for use in final evaluation on 2/9/23)**
- 3. Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc (Novak) – 6:45**
- 4. Slavin Management Consultants – 7:45**
- 5. Discussion**
- 6. New Business**
- 7. Adjournment**

If you require an accommodation (e.g. hearing assistance) to attend this meeting, please notify Candace Golubski at (913) 895-5506 no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled commencement of the meeting.

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

<b>EVALUATION AND NOTES PAGE FOR RATING EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM PRESENTATIONS</b>		
<b>Criteria 1- Evidence of experience and references with similar projects: 20 Points</b>	<b>Notes for Criteria 1</b>	<b>Please enter rating of 1-20 (20 is highest and 1 is lowest)</b>
a. Consider experience and references listed by the Proposer. Is the Proposer experienced in providing executive search services for positions similar to that requested in the RFP?		
b. Familiarity and experience with similar projects. References from at least five (5) clients of similar scope and size.		
<b>Criteria 2- Expertise of firm/provider personnel: 20 Points</b>	<b>Notes for Criteria 2</b>	<b>Please enter rating of 1-20 (20 is highest and 1 is lowest)</b>
a. Consider comparable experience and background of specific personnel that shall be assigned to WaterOne's project. Experience on projects of similar scope and size:		
<b>Criteria 3- Applicable resources: 20 Points</b>	<b>Notes for Criteria 3</b>	<b>Please enter rating of 1-20 (20 is highest and 1 is lowest)</b>
a. Evaluate the extent of applicable resources available to the Proposer to complete WaterOne's project.		
b. Standard quality assurance/quality control program or procedures the firm has in place.		
c. Adequacy of proposed team/resources to complete project within proposed time frame.		
d. Communication with WaterOne Board, staff, and candidates.		
e. IT (Information Technology) support and virtual meeting capabilities.		
<b>Criteria 4- Responses to requirements section and project narrative: 25 Points</b>	<b>Notes for Criteria 4</b>	<b>Please enter rating of 1-25 (25 is highest and 1 is lowest)</b>
a. Evaluate the Proposer's approach to and understanding of the scope of services and total project required in the RFP as evidenced in the proposal.		
b. Project schedule and detailed approach is reasonable/responsive to WaterOne's needs · Roles of all involved parties clearly identified.		
c. Familiarity with Client WaterOne location, culture, objectives, achievements, local area as evidenced by proposal.		
d. Identify/recognize critical or unique issues specific to the project		
e. Adequacy of proposed communications process		
f. Unique approaches that have been successful elsewhere		
<b>Criteria 5- Cost: 15 Points</b>	<b>Enter notes below</b>	<b>Please enter rating of 1-15 (15 is highest and 1 is lowest)</b>
a. Fee schedule included for pricing; includes assessments, services, travel, on-site communication, sourcing, anything else pertaining to cost		<b>WaterOne Staff will enter and share cost info after 1st round of presentation evaluations.</b>
<b>Additional Notes:</b>		

*Please use back of sheet if you have additional comments*

# MEMO

**To:** Kim Alexander, Human Resources Administrative Assistant  
WaterOne Board Members  
**From:** Catherine Tuck Parrish, Vice President  
**Date:** February 2, 2023  
**Re:** Additional WaterOne Executive Search Firm RFP Questions

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Please see our responses below to the additional questions to the WaterOne Executive Search Firm RFP. We look forward to presenting our qualifications in person to the WaterOne Board Members at the Committee of the Whole.

**1. Tell us about CEO or General Manager water utility placements conducted by you personally or members of the staff identified in your proposal. (Include position, location, timeline, size, and structure of utilities).**

The most recent CEO or General Manager water utility placements conducted by Catherine Tuck Parrish are:

**Central Arizona Project, Phoenix, Arizona: General Manager (2022)**

Central Arizona Project maintains a 336-mile-long system of aqueducts, tunnels, pumping plants, and pipelines to deliver water to more than five million people in Maricopa, Pinal, and Pima counties. It is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors.

**Mount Pleasant Waterworks, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina: General Manager (2020)**

Mount Pleasant Waterworks delivers water and treats wastewater. Its service area is 70 square miles. It is governed by seven elected Commissioners, the Mayor, and the Chairman of the Water Supply Committee of Town Council.

**Livingston County Water and Sewer Authority, Lakeville, New York: Executive Director (2020)**

Livingston County Water and Sewer Authority provides water and sewer services to customers in Livingston County. It is governed by a seven-member appointed Board of Supervisors. At the time of this recruitment, the Authority had 11 full-time employees and a 2021 approved budget of \$3.2 million.

For each of these recruitments, the full-service search process described in the proposal was used to fill these positions. Each search requires approximately three months to complete, depending on the client's needs and the recruitment environment.

**a. Will the presenter be part of your recruitment team? If not, who will lead the recruitment?**

Yes, Catherine Tuck-Parrish will be the Lead Recruiter.

- i. Tell us about the experience of the person leading recruitment including their success placing water utility GM candidates?

Catherine has 30 years of management experience working for local governments of all sizes, nonprofit organizations, and associations. She leads the firm's executive search practice and has conducted over 160 searches for manager/administrator; police chief; fire chief; directors of public works, planning, economic development, finance, human resources, and human services; and other key positions in local governments across the country. Most recently, Catherine led the teams which successfully placed the General Manager of Central Arizona Project, part of the Central Arizona Water Conservation District; the General Manager for Mount Pleasant Waterworks; and the Executive Director for the Livingston County Water and Sewer Authority.

- b. Who will be our primary contact?

Catherine Tuck-Parrish  
Email: [ctuckparish@raftelis.com](mailto:ctuckparish@raftelis.com)  
Phone: (240) 832-1778

- c. Are all team members listed in your proposal employees, or will you use consultants or contractors for this project?

All team members listed in the proposal are employees. Raftelis will not include any subconsultants on our team for this engagement. Based on our extensive experience and current availability, we are fully confident in our ability to successfully complete this project with in-house staff.

- d. How soon will the team members be available to start the WaterOne engagement?

Team members will be available to begin this engagement in early March, as indicated in the proposal, coupled with a mutually agreed upon fully executed contract.

- e. How many additional clients will the team be engaged with while conducting WaterOne's search?

35.

- f. What percent of your placements are for private sector/non-profit/government organizations?

We specialize in local government and public utility recruitments at the executive level. All our recruitments are in the public sector.

- i. Do you think that makes a difference to candidates? Why?

Yes, our expertise lies in transforming and strengthening public-sector organizations. We understand the unique challenges faced by those who work in public organizations, and we are skilled at communicating with potential public sector candidates throughout the entire process. Additionally, we have extensive connections with public sector organizations and people in the public sector throughout the country who can recommend high-quality candidates who would be a good fit for a position. Some of the organizations and connections we would rely on when working with WaterOne include but are not limited to: Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference, American Water Works Association, International City/County Managers Association, and American Society of Civil Engineers. Additionally, we are a national firm and have clients throughout the country who help us

identify great applicants in their region. Finally, we have had many recruitments that result from a candidate who had a great experience with us. Even though they were not the selected candidate, because of the way they were treated and how professionally the recruitment was run, they advocated for our firm to be selected in a recruitment process in their community.

## **2. Tell us about a placement that was unique/challenging?**

### **a. What were the circumstances?**

The majority of our searches result in the successful placement of a highly qualified candidate. However, the Newport News Human Resources Director recruitment presented a unique challenge that we successfully overcame. The circumstance included a candidate who refused to provide the reference of her most recent supervisor after receiving a conditional offer of employment, pending a successful reference check. Additionally, she became difficult to contact, which caused the City Manager to withdraw the employment offer.

### **b. How was the challenge overcome?**

The challenge was overcome by keeping the recruitment posting open, at no additional charge to the City of Newport News. We also included a weekly meeting with the interim Human Resources Director to discuss potential new candidates and expedited the interview process when new candidates were identified.

### **c. What was the outcome?**

After several additional weeks, the position was successfully filled by a highly qualified candidate.

## **3. Describe an unsuccessful placement experienced by you or your firm. Unsuccessful includes a search did not result in a candidate hired, the candidate voluntarily left, or the organization determined the placement was not an appropriate match)?**

Raftelis prides itself on working with each client until we have successfully placed a candidate in positions where we have entered into an agreement with. Loudoun County, Virginia is one of the fastest growing counties in the Northeast, where increasing home prices have contributed to a deficit of workforce housing. To address this growing issue, Loudoun County created a new Housing and Community Development department and contracted with Raftelis to recruit the department director. The recruitment was executed as mutually agreed on by both Raftelis and Loudoun County. However, during the final background verification and reference check, it was determined that the final candidate's education had been misrepresented by the final candidate. Raftelis addressed this with the final candidate and gave the candidate an opportunity to rectify the situation. The final candidate was unable to provide proof of their education and was released from the search. Subsequently, Raftelis continued the search at no additional charge to Loudoun County, outside of the costs for travel and background checks, and placed a highly qualified and sought after candidate in the position.

### **a. Do you have a guarantee? If yes, please describe.**

Raftelis guarantees placement of a qualified candidate. If, within the first twelve months after the start date, the successful candidate leaves the organization for any reason other than death or disability, or separation initiated by the Client without cause, Raftelis will conduct a replacement search for the position without charging a Professional Services Fee. The only cost to the Client would be the project

expenses related to the replacement search. Within the guarantee period, Raftelis must be notified in writing of a separation within 30 days of its occurrence.

**b. What is your firm's completion/placement rate? Explain.**

Raftelis has a 97% completion rate for all executive recruitments. There are rare instances when, after beginning a search, clients decide to do an internal promotion, therefore no longer requiring us to complete the search.

**4. Our Selection Committee is a Committee of the Whole consisting of all seven elected Board members. Describe how you will communicate directly with the Board and the frequency, while complying with Open Meetings Act requirements?**

**a. Tell us how you maintain secure communication, discretion and/or confidentiality with an elected board.**

We have conducted recruitments in Kansas and will work with WaterOne to ensure compliance with open meeting requirements. We would initially coordinate with WaterOne's legal counsel to review our process and ensure it meets their open meeting requirements and other public information laws. Additionally, we are skilled at one-on-one meetings and small group meetings with Board members to ensure compliance with open meeting requirements.

**b. Will the team be available to come on-site to interact with the Board and stakeholders?**

Our process is a hybrid process including both virtual and on-site meetings. We conduct our initial meetings to develop the recruitment plan, position profile, and first year goals, and the first round of interviews virtually. We then conduct the final interviews on-site.

**c. Tell us about methodologies used working with an elected Board to reach consensus/decision on a candidate.**

We are accustomed to meeting with Board members in closed session to share pertinent information about each of the top candidates with the goal of the elected Board reaching consensus based on the consultant's initial screening and presentation of top candidates. In many instances, the consultant will share pertinent attributes about candidates that helps the Board reach consensus.

**d. Describe your firm's approach working with an elected board and designated staff to develop the recruitment/selection process, candidate profile, and interview preparation.**

We would first meet with the Board members, individually and as a group, and designated stakeholders, to develop a recruitment plan and position profile. Our recruitment team would develop the recruitment plan, interview process, position profile, recruitment brochure, and first year goals based upon the information learned in these meetings. These documents would be shared with the designated WaterOne project team member for review and approval. The recruitment team will revise the documents based on feedback from the project team. The WaterOne project team will have final approval of all recruitment documents.

Prior to the first round of interviews, the recruitment team will meet with WaterOne's project team in a Candidate Review meeting to present the candidates that Raftelis recommends for the first round of interviews. The recruitment team will also draft interview questions for WaterOne's approval for both the semi-final and the final interviews. The recruitment team (Raftelis) will plan and facilitate the interviews and conduct pre- and post-interview briefings.

## 5. How will you market WaterOne to potential candidates?

### a. What are WaterOne's biggest selling points?

WaterOne has many great selling points. First, the organizational culture includes the goal of being an Employer of Choice coupled with an intentional focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with three vital elements: having a diverse workforce, a working environment that welcomes and celebrates employee differences; and policies and procedures that affect their employees and customers equitably. One additional selling point is WaterOne's robust community engagement, which further demonstrates their desire for inclusion, shared accountability, and customer satisfaction.

### b. How will you describe WaterOne's structure and culture to potential candidates?

Consistent with WaterOne's Vision of setting the standard for utility excellence, one of WaterOne's goals is to be an employer of choice. This is demonstrated by their belief that the keys to the organization's success include maintaining a diverse workforce composed of a variety of perspectives and lived experiences; a working environment that welcomes and celebrates employees' differences; and policies and procedures that affect their employees and the customers who are served equitably.

### c. What is unique about WaterOne?

One of the unique features of WaterOne is that WaterOne was born from their customers' desire for the highest quality of water and reliability. In 1957, residents were dissatisfied with the value and service from their water provider, so they came together to buy out the Kansas City Suburban Water Company. They reincorporated as a public water provider, Water District No. 1 of Johnston Company and now serve most of Johnston County, thus the name WaterOne. This history is reflected in WaterOne's continued dedication to community engagement.

### d. What is your understanding of WaterOne's community involvement and reputation?

WaterOne has a robust community-engagement program built on the premises that we are universally affected by water and that water is important, fascinating, and fun. WaterOne's community engagement program includes school programming, community events, staff volunteer days with organizations like Habitat for Humanity of Kansas City and the Ronald McDonald House, river clean-ups, speaking engagements, and informational campaigns.

### e. How will WaterOne employees who are interested in the position apply?

WaterOne employees who are interested in the position will follow the same process as external candidates. They will apply through the link that Raftelis will provide to the application on Raftelis' website, where they will upload a cover letter and a resume, and answer application questions. This approach ensures a fair and equitable process.

## 6. Please give specific examples of steps your firm has utilized in the past to recruit nation-wide, qualified CEO/GM water utility or public entity candidates who may not be actively pursuing a job change?

First, we meet with the project team to develop a recruitment plan and position profile that is unique to the client. A customized recruitment and outreach process is developed as part of the recruitment plan, which includes national, regional, and local organizations for targeted advertising, as well as social media postings. We also develop an outreach plan for reaching out to potential candidates through email and



LinkedIn. Potential candidates to contact also come from our extensive database, prospective candidates we have targeted for similar recruitments, and any other additional sources based upon WaterOne's needs. Often, the professionals who best fit an open position are already employed and not searching for a traditional job posting. So, we leverage our extensive, diverse professional network to attract the best talent nationwide. Additionally, our outreach includes seeking well-qualified women and people of color.

Raftelis as a firm has worked with more than 1,000 water, clean water, stormwater, and solid waste utilities throughout North America. We thus have an extensive network from which to draw potential candidates, as well as extensive knowledge about these organizations. Our firm is active in the American Water Works Association, WEFTEC, and many other national trade associations and public sector organizations such as the International City/County Managers Association

**a. What source of outreach does your company find most successful?**

We engage in both direct and indirect outreach to identify candidates. We also have extensive networks across the country and through our involvement in numerous public sector organizations. We find this combination of indirect and direct outreach, through job postings in local, national, and regional organizations, LinkedIn, and social media; outreach to qualified candidates in our extensive database; potential candidates from jurisdictions specified in the recruitment plan; and candidates recommended to us through our network is an effective way to recruit top candidates, some of whom may not have been looking for a new position.

**b. How does your firm ensure all qualified candidates make it through the initial screening process for the next step?**

We monitor the applicant tracking system, which includes each candidate's resume and supplemental applicant materials, regularly, throughout the recruitment process. We carefully evaluate each applicant against the position profile.

**c. Tell us your policy concerning soliciting external placements or WaterOne employees identified as candidates.**

Raftelis treats each applicant fairly and equitably. All applicants will apply through Raftelis' applicant tracking system and experience each part of the recruitment process.

**d. What is your policy regarding conflicts-of-interest? How are conflicts-of-interest identified or reported?**

Conflicts of interest are identified throughout the recruitment process and are reported to both the client and the applicant as soon as they are identified. Raftelis prides itself on conducting a fair and equitable recruitment process.

**7. Describe the types of candidate assessments and/or screening tools used in previous searches and how they contributed to a successful placement.**

Candidates' applicant materials are first screened against the position profile. Those who most closely match the position profile are then further screened through a phone interview, where they are asked specific questions relevant to the position, as well as their level of interest in the position. Those who most closely match the position profile after the phone screen are then presented to the client project team. This two-part method contributes to a successful placement because it results in candidates who best meet the position profile and who are the most interested in the position being moved forward to the semi-final and final interview rounds.



a. Tell us how your firm will identify CEO/General Manager candidates that align with WaterOne's values, mission, and goals?

Working with the Board of Directors and other relevant stakeholders, we will develop a position profile which incorporates WaterOne's values, missions, and goals. We will screen candidates utilizing the criteria laid out in the position profile.

b. Describe content and how screening results will be shared with the Board (assessments, pre-interviews, candidate profiles, etc.)

Applicant content and screening results will be shared with the Board through an Update Memo and Candidate Review Materials. After the first review date, we will send an update memo to WaterOne, detailing the number of applicants and defining the rest of the recruitment process. This document will also contain educational and demographic information on the applicants.

Next, the consultant will provide Candidate Review Materials to the Board in preparation for their Candidate Review meeting. These materials include a memo summarizing the candidates chosen for review, the candidates' cover letters and resumes; notes from phone interviews conducted with each candidate; and internet and social media research conducted on each candidate. The Candidate Review materials also include potential interview questions and details about the semi-final and final interview processes. The overall goal of this meeting is to determine which candidates will move forward to the semi-interview phase of the process and begin to finalize the final interview process.

**8. Describe methods previously used to present candidates to the Board. Tell us your approach of when, how, and who facilitates in-person meetings.**

Three primary methods are used to present candidates to the Board. These include a Candidate Review Meeting, semi-final, and final interview processes. As previously described, after the first review date, we will send an update memo and the candidate review materials to the project team. The candidate review materials include a detailed set of questions asked by the Lead Recruiter and responses provided by each applicant during the initial screening of the top applicants. The Lead Recruiter will often make this presentation to the Board in a Closed Session to maintain the identity of the applicants.

During the semi-final interview process, the semi-final candidates will be presented to the Board through a virtual semi-final interview process, which may include questions from the Board or by making a presentation to the Board on a topic of relevance to the Board and organization.

During the final interview process, the final candidates will be presented to the Board in an on-site setting which will include predesigned activities and exercises. The pre-designed activities and exercises can include candidate-led presentations or discussions on issues relevant to the organization.

The Candidate Review meeting, semi-final, and final interviews will be facilitated by the Lead Recruiter. The Candidate Review meeting and semi-final interviews are usually virtual, and the final interviews are in-person. The precise timeline for each of these deliverables and meetings will be set in the recruitment plan based upon WaterOne's schedule and needs.

a. Tell us about the advantages and disadvantages of different methods.

While each client has unique preferences and familiarity with Executive Search processes, each of the methods described has proven to be effective throughout our numerous successful searches.

b. Describe the travel processes for members of your firm and the potential candidate.

Travel costs for the consultant are part of the fixed fee. WaterOne will be responsible for interviewee travel costs. Both the Raftelis staff and the final candidates are responsible for making their individual travel arrangements.

c. How and when do you publicize successful placement(s)?

Successful placements will be publicized as desired by WaterOne and should be mutually agreed upon by both WaterOne and the final candidate.

**9. What hiring trends are you seeing in CEO/General Manager water utility positions and/or public entities?**

a. What are executive level water utility candidates basing their decisions on?

Executive level water utility candidates are basing their decisions on several things. These include the organization's progressive nature, their ability to impact change, its financial stability, and the ability to recruit and retain a talented workforce. Executive level candidates are looking for increasing levels of responsibility, the ability to exercise leadership skills at a progressive employer, and compensation. Those moving within the government sector are interested in maintaining things like retirement systems and insurance plans. It seems less likely, but not impossible, to have an executive level person move from private sector to public sector in search of a less hectic lifestyle (i.e., reduced travel or job stress).

b. What are factors that determine an acceptance of an offer?

Both tangible and intangible factors determine the acceptance of an offer. These include the geographic location of the organization, a competitive salary and benefits package, the progressive and innovative readiness of the organization, and the diversity, inclusiveness, and equitable nature of the organization. Additionally, candidates want to know about the level of autonomy they can expect in the position. Candidates may also want to know if the utility is more political or if it truly managed like a public sector business; preferences may vary by candidate.

c. What have been key total compensation elements for not-for-profit CEO or General Manager water utility placements?

Key total compensation elements most often include base salary, both short-term and long-term incentives, employee benefits, perquisites, and severance packages.

d. Based on your company's experience, recent placements, and low employment rates, what level of interest do you anticipate from individuals with General Manager qualifications?

Based on our ability to do extensive outreach and networks within the industry, we anticipate a high-level of interest in this position.

**10. Tell us about any changes in business structure in the previous five years (merger, acquisition, sale, etc.) and what elements of the business changed.**

Raftelis has made recent acquisitions of three firms to enhance the services we provide to our clients. In 2019, Raftelis acquired Public Resources Management Group (PRMG) to add additional resources to our financial and rate consulting practice, particularly in the Southeast. We acquired The Novak

Consulting Group in 2020 to enhance our management consulting services for local government agencies. Westin Technology Solutions was acquired in 2021 to enhance our technology services for utilities.

a. Tell us about any planned changes in business structure within the next 12 months (merger, acquisition, sale, expansion, downsize, etc.).

There are no such planned changes within the next 12 months.

### **11. Why should the Board choose your search firm over other search firms?**

Raftelis' expertise lies in strengthening and transforming public-sector organizations. We are consulting specialists rather than generalists, focusing our strengths on doing a highly effective job for a specific group of clients. Raftelis specializes in working with the public sector, so we understand the unique opportunities and challenges of working within these organizations. Our Lead Recruiter has over twenty years of experience recruiting for the public sector and has experience working within local government. Our recruitment team can thus leverage the large knowledge base and public sector network available within Raftelis to develop recruitment materials and an aggressive outreach plan to attract well-qualified candidates for WaterOne. Our current recruitment team has worked together to successfully recruit for a variety of public sector positions all over the country, from county, city and town managers, executive and general managers for authorities and districts, and department heads. We understand local government and public utilities. We know how to target candidates specifically for the public sector and how to speak to people who work within the public sector.

**Response provided by Bob Slavin, President  
SLAVIN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS  
3040 Holcomb Bridge Road, A1  
Norcross, Georgia 30034  
(770) 449-4656  
[slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net)**

## ADDITIONAL WATERONE EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM RFP QUESTIONS

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### Question # 1

Tell us about CEO or General Manager water utility placements conducted by you personally or members of the staff identified in your proposal. (Include position, location, timeline, size, and structure of utilities)

**Example # One** — Greater Peoria (Illinois) Sanitary and Sewage Disposal District (GPSD) - Executive Director Search conducted by Bob Slavin and Dave Krings.

GPSD collects and treats domestic and domestic wastewater in a 66 square mile area which includes the cities of Peoria, Peoria Heights, Bartonville, West Peoria, and Bellevue plus adjacent unincorporated areas.

GPSD is a municipal corporation governed by a 5-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Peoria County Board with the advice and consent of member representatives.

The General Manager search began on August 19, 2017, and was completed on November 1, 2017.

**Example # Two** — Gulf Shores Utilities (GSU) (Alabama) - General Manager Search conducted by Bob Slavin and Dave Krings.

GSU is an award winning water and wastewater utility which provides water through 130 miles of water lines to 11,881 customers (20,000 residential units). GSU's water treatment system serves about 16,000 residential units and has a total permit capacity of 4.0 MGD. GSU employs approximately 40 FTE's

GSU is a municipal corporation governed by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the Gulf Shores City Council to six-year renewable terms.

The General Manager search began on March 13, 2019 and was completed on July 7, 2019.

- a. Will the presenter be part of your recruitment team? If not, who will lead the recruitment?  
Yes, Robert Slavin will manage the search and have overall responsibility for the project. David Krings will assist.
- b. Bob Slavin has managed and actively participated in more than 900 searches of which approximately 20 were public utility executive placements. Mr. Krings served as Senior Consultant on both GPSD and the Gulf Shores Utilities projects.

**Example #Three** — Orange Water and Sewer Authority( OWASA) {Chapel Hill & Carrboro, NC} - Executive Director Search conducted by Bob Slavin and Barbara Lipscomb, assisted by Dave Krings.

OWASA is a special purpose local government entity which provides water, wastewater and reclaimed water to the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro and portions of Orange County, North Carolina. OWASA is governed by nine-member Board of Directors. Five members are appointed by the Chapel Hill Town Council and two each are appointed by the Town of Carrboro Town Council and the Orange County Board of Commissioners.

OWASA's employs 145 FTE's. Its service area is 31 square miles within which it services 21,987 accounts. OWASA has a total water capacity of 3,000 MGD and a wastewater treatment capacity of 20 MGD.

- a. Will the presenter be part of our recruitment team?

Yes, Mr. Slavin will manage and retain ultimate responsibility for the search. During his 40+ year career he has managed hundreds of nonprofit and local government executive searches including approximately twenty-five for public utility executives.

- b. Who will be our primary contact?

Bob Slavin

- c. Are all team members listed in your proposal employees, or will you use consultants or contractors for this project?

Mr. Slavin is an SMC employee, Although the other team members work exclusively for Slavin Management Consultants, they are not full-time employees but work for SMC on a 1099 basis.

- d. How soon will the team members be available to start the WaterOne engagement?

We could be available within two weeks.

- e. How many additional clients will the team be engaged with while conducting WaterOne's search?

No more than three. Although we have the capacity to handle as many as six assuming that they are not all running on the same calendar.

- f. What percent of your placements are for private sector/non-profit/government organizations?

About 90% of our work is for governments, 8% is for non-profits. SMC has very few for profit clients.

- g. Do you think that makes a difference to candidates? Why?

Yes, the corporate structure of the utility does make a difference to candidates. I have found that most prefer to work for a special district, authority or some type of nonprofit rather than for a utility that is a department of a local government. For a number of reasons they prefer the increased level of autonomy provided when working directly for an independent policy making rather than for a governmental CEO or department head.

**Question # 2** Tell us about a placement that was unique/challenging?

We recently completed a national search for the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG).

- a. What were the circumstances?

MWCOG is an independent, nonprofit association where area leaders address regional issues affecting the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. MWCOG comprises 24 local governments in the Washington metropolitan area, as well as area members of the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives. About 300 local, state, and federal elected officials make up its membership. MWCOG's 24 member Board is comprised of a politically powerful group of elected officials representing constituencies comprised of every diversity imaginable. Prevalent issues facing the COG are the environment, affordable housing, regional growth and development, public health, child welfare, public safety, homeland security, and transportation. Our challenge was to find candidates who possess the interpersonal skills necessary to develop and advocate for at times very sensitive ideas and to build sufficient consensus around them without alienating opposing

Board members.

- b, How was the challenge overcome?

We developed a very tight project time line with benchmarks. We met weekly (mostly virtually) with the Board Chair and a Deputy Executive Director to report progress, get exchange ideas, discuss applicants and potential applicants and next steps. The Board Chair was also the Chair of the eight member Executive Director Search Committee. He kept his colleagues informed. Thankfully, as a 501c3 non profit corporation MWCOG is exempt from Washington DC, Virginia and Maryland public records and open meetings. We were able to keep candidate names confidential.

- c. What was the outcome?

We presented three finalist candidates to the full Board. The Board unanimously selected a first choice and a second choice. The top choice candidate accepted the position

**Question # 3** Describe an unsuccessful placement experienced by you or your firm. Unsuccessful includes a search did not result in a candidate hired, the candidate voluntarily left, or the organization determined the placement was not an appropriate match)?

- a. We did a City Manager search for a Florida city. City Council elections were about to take place with only one member change expected. The sitting City Council unanimously selected a City Manager candidate, He accepted the position, The election unexpectedly resulted a change to the Council majority and a policy change from pro growth to no growth. Although, the new Council was supportive of the incoming Manager, he was not willing to work for them. Slavin Management Consultants redid the search.

- b. Do you have a guarantee? If yes, please describe.

We will work for WaterOne until a successful placement is made. Should he or she leave for any reason within the first two years, we will redo the search for no additional professional fee.

- c. What is your firm's completion/placement rate? Explain.

Without having computed it, it is safe to say that our completion rate is over 95%.

**Question # 4** Our Selection Committee is a Committee of the Whole consisting of all seven elected Board members. Describe how you will communicate directly with the Board and the frequency, while complying with Open Meetings Act requirements?

First step will be to meet with WaterOne's legal counsel for a briefing on the Kansas Open Meetings Act, counsel's interpretation of the law and what limitations and opportunities it provides. We will need to have a clear understanding of how effective consultant/client communications can occur within the law. I suspect that we will need to meet with Selection Committee members individually and in person at least three times during the search. SMC has a large Florida clientele. Florida has the strongest open meetings and public records laws in the nation. In Florida candidate applications become public documents upon receipt. Finalist interviews are required to take place in public.

- a. Tell us how you maintain secure communication, discretion and/or confidentiality with an elected board.

Primarily through individual one-on one meetings.

- b. Will the team be available to come on-site to interact with the Board and stakeholders?

Absolutely

- c. Tell us about methodologies used working with an elected Board to reach consensus/decision on a candidate.

In selecting a semifinalist candidates group and in advance of a public Board meeting, we narrow the candidate field to those who best meet the Board's criteria, We then interview those prospects and have them complete a comprehensive narrative questionnaire which is tailored to the Board's established requirements and preferences. We then provide each Board members with substantial information about each prospect and ask each to rank the candidates from first to last choice.

***Finalist interviews in Lenexa*** We recommend that each Board member interview each finalist candidate individually prior to conducting public interviews and discussing the candidates.

- d. Describe your firm's approach working with an elected board and designated staff to develop the recruitment/selection process, candidate profile, and interview preparation.

We accomplish each of the above steps though individual meetings with Board members. We will be in Lenexa at least three times to accomplish these items.

**Question # 5** How will you market WaterOne to potential candidates?

We will identify qualified prospects, invite them to apply for the job and provide them with the General Manager Recruitment Profile. The profile will contain detailed information about WaterOne. It will include demographic information about Johnson County, its quality of life amenities, WaterOne, its history, services provided, processing and distribution technology, the Board, the organizational culture, mission, goals and values, finances, organizational structure, the size and nature of its customer base, current issues and opportunities the position of General Manager, job qualifications, compensation information and how to apply for the job.

- a. What are WaterOne's biggest selling points?

WaterOne's governance system, its 272 square mile, 400,000 customer service area, its strong financial position, its award winning reputation for product quality and service reliability, its Johnson County location, its reasonable cost of living and the longevity of its former General Manager.

- b. How will you describe WaterOne's structure and culture to potential candidates?

Right now, I don't have sufficient information to provide a meaningful response to this question. If selected, our first tasks will be to come to Lenexa to gather detailed information about WaterOne.

- c. What is unique about WaterOne?

Right now, I don't have sufficient information to provide a meaningful response to this question. If selected, our first tasks will be to come to Lenexa to gather detailed information about WaterOne.

- d. What is your understanding of WaterOne's community involvement and reputation?

I don't know but after reading the Board Member bios I am interested and eager to find out.

- e. How will WaterOne employees who are interested in the position apply?

For project control and consistency, We want all applicants to apply through Slavin Management Consultants.



**Question # 6** Please give specific examples of steps your firm has utilized in the past to recruit nationwide, qualified CEO/GM water utility or public entity candidates who may not be actively pursuing a job change?

Once we know more about WaterOne and the Board has approved the Job Announcement and Recruitment Profile, we begin determining where qualified individuals will likely be. We then develop a source list consisting of agencies, individuals, our data base, professional associations, pertinent social media platforms, etc. We place announcements with professional associations. Once identified, we invite qualified prospects and provide them with information about WaterOne and the position. And we follow up with phone calls.

a. What source of outreach does your company find most successful?

Direct outreach, well-placed professional announcements, and word of mouth among utility professionals

b. How does your firm ensure all qualified candidates make it through the initial screening process for the next step?

First, through careful screening of cover letters and resumes, then through telephone interviews and candidate responses to a narrative supplemental questionnaire.

c. Tell us your policy concerning soliciting external placements or WaterOne employees identified as candidates.

Not sure that I understand the question. However, all applicants are treated the same including WaterOne employees who apply for the position.

d. What is your policy regarding conflicts-of-interest? How are conflicts-of-interest identified or reported?

Thankfully conflicts of interest have occurred seldom in our experience. Our approach to conflicts and perceived conflicts is to let the involved parties know that we suspect the conflict or the perception there of. If we determine that the conflict is real and the parties don't resolve it, we inform our client of the matter.

**Question # 7** Describe the types of candidate assessments and/or screening tools used in previous searches and how they contributed to a successful placement.

SMC's search process is very thorough and includes multiple professionally performed background verifications and checks and includes on-site finalist consultant/candidate interviews. We are confident that our recommended finalists are technically well-qualified and have the leadership and management attributes expected. Our successful placement track record attests to this.

Although not part of our normal search process, at clients request, SMC will arrange to have leadership and management assessments performed such as cognitive testing and/or personality inventories on finalist candidates. This testing may add some informational value to the search but we have not found it to alter the placement process.

a. Tell us how your firm will identify CEO/General Manager candidates that align with WaterOne's values, mission, and goals.

As a part of our process, we provide semifinalist candidates with copies of our client's values, mission and goals. Our supplemental questionnaire will ask candidates to relate to them through prior experiences and/or conceptually. We verify the information through site visit interviews and reference checks.

- b. Describe content and how screening results will be shared with the Board (assessments, pre-interviews, candidate profiles, etc.)

Candidate confidentiality is a major concern. Sensitive information is provided to the Board in one-on-one meetings.

**Question # 8** Describe methods previously used to present candidates to the Board. Tell us your approach of when, how, and who facilitates “in person” meetings.

Where state law permits we present semifinalist and finalist candidates to our clients in executive sessions. Clearly this is desirable because (1) it provides the same information to all Board members at the same time; (2) all members can participate in and benefit from a collective candidate discussion and (3) candidate confidentiality is protected.

My understanding is that Kansas open meetings and public records laws preclude executive sessions for executive recruitment purposes. A process similar to what is described in Question #4 is likely the best option.

SMC consultants will facilitate “in person” meetings.

- a. Tell us about the advantages and disadvantages of different methods.

See above comments.

- b. Describe the travel processes for members of your firm and the potential candidate.

SMC consultants travel using coach air travel and reasonable priced hotel accommodations such as Holiday Inn. Consultant travel costs are covered in our not-to-exceed expense budget.

Candidate travel costs are hard to anticipate in advance. These expenses are not included in our proposal. Candidates are typically reimbursed by our clients directly. They are instructed to be cost conscious and to keep expense receipts.

- c. How and when do you publicize successful placement(s)?

We don't publicize placements. Our clients typically do.

**Question # 9** What hiring trends are you seeing in CEO/General Manager water utility positions and/or public entities?

We are getting good quality applicants but a lower quantity of responses. Recent trends that we are experiencing in all of our work include reluctance to move in this housing market, residency requirements, family concerns such as spouse employment replacement or children in school,

We have found that top utility executives in quality organizations are difficult to recruit. They tend to stay in their positions until retirement. Many have also groomed their replacements making the second tier of qualified prospects difficult to recruit. These people are often helpful in identifying other qualified prospects.

Utility CEO's in smaller organizations or whose utility is organized as local government department might be good prospects for WaterOne.

- a. What are executive level water utility candidates basing their decisions on?

Everyone is different. There has to be something in the new job which motivates the applicant. Examples might be quality and reputation of the new organization, compelling location, family

educational opportunities, compensation, high quality of life and affordable cost of living

- b. What are the factors that determine an acceptance of an offer?

This varies with each candidate. See response to a. above for some ideas.

- c. What have been key total compensation elements for not-for-profit CEO or General Manager water utility placements?

Examples include an employment agreement with a severance provision, a competitive beginning salary with built in performance-based increases, an attractive retirement plan with a significant employer contribution, insurances including employer paid family health coverage a vehicle allowance,

- d. Based on your company's experience, recent placements, and low employment rates, what level of interest do you anticipate from individuals with General Manager qualifications?

As stated above, I expect that we will attract high quality applicants but no more than about twenty of them.

**Question # 10** Tell us about any changes in business structure in the previous five years (merger, acquisition, sale, etc.) and what elements of the business changed.

None

- a. Tell us about any planned changes in business structure within the next 12 months (merger, acquisition, sale, expansions, downsize, etc.).

None

**Question # 11** Why should the Board choose your search firm over other search firms?

A few reasons to consider choosing Slavin Management Consultants are:

- ▶ Outcome-oriented process which has produced highly successful Executive placements in all regions of the United States
- ▶ Thorough and proven search process
- ▶ Interactive style customized to meet individual client needs
- ▶ More than 25% of our placements are women and/or minorities
- ▶ Ninety-five percent of SMC placements remain in their positions for more than five years
- ▶ On-site visits of all finalist candidates (COVID-19 permitting)
- ▶ Strongest guarantees in the field
- ▶ Costs are capped and well within industry standards