



To: Mayor and Town Council

From: Mark C. Meyers, Town Manager

Date: March 12, 2026

Subject: Town Planner/Zoning Administrator Position – Contract Option

Background

At the January town council work meeting I proposed exploring hiring a full-time planner/zoning administrator to add capacity in an area that is very busy and in which we're weak on. Since then, I've reviewed our budget resources and also reviewed what it would cost to attract and retain a planner. We currently spend approximately \$70,000 annually on these services. A full-time position would be about \$130,000. Hiring for this position could also have adverse effects on the way we compensate for fringe benefits (stipends versus funded programs for health and retirement, for example). So, there are two challenges to my original proposal.

However, since the discussion with council, Mayor Krause and I explored another option that is less expensive, does not impact our compensation plan and still provides additional in-house capacity. It includes contracting with our current planning service provider Ryker Steglich of Sunrise Engineering but instead of being "on call" he would spend 2-3 days in an office at Town Hall, attend planning commission and town council meetings and as such, be more readily accessible much like a regular employee. Attached is a proposed contract which defines the scope of services and includes a budget. The estimated annual cost is \$112,173.

This concept was discussed by the Town Council at the March 11, 2026, work meeting and the consensus was to move forward with it.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Town Council approve a new contract with Sunrise Engineering for an in-house town planner/zoning administrator effective this fiscal year.