



STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

April 19, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Karen T. Diemer, City Manager

PREPARER: Danette Demello, Assistant City Manager

DATE: April 10, 2023

TITLE: **Ratify Employment Agreement with Emily R. Sinkhorn for Director of Environmental Services for the Term of May 3, 2023, through May 2, 2028.**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the Council ratify the employment agreement with Emily R. Sinkhorn for Director of Environmental Services for the term of May 3, 2023, through May 2, 2028.

INTRODUCTION:

Upon the City Manager's continued appointment of Emily R. Sinkhorn as Director of Environmental Services Director, the Council is asked to ratify the resulting employment agreement for a term of five (5) years, commencing May 3, 2023, through May 2, 2028.

BACKGROUND:

Per Title II, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2121 of the Arcata Municipal Code, department heads are to be appointed by and are directly responsible to the City Manager.

Director of Environmental Services, Emily Sinkhorn was first appointed on May 3, 2021, and entered into an initial two (2) year employment contract. Upon successful completion of two years of service as Director of Environmental Services the recommendation is approval of a standard five (5) year agreement.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Sinkhorn has demonstrated strong leadership and department management skills this past two years. She has over 18 combined years of experience in watershed restoration, climate change, forestry, alternative transportation, grant development and community engagement. Emily graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and has a Master of Science in Forest Ecology from Oregon State University.

Some of the most notable accomplishments from Director Sinkhorn's first two years include:

- Provided leadership for significant department transition that included the hiring and/or promoting of 24 staff.
- Secured funds and property to develop Carlson Park including;
 - A rural recreation and tourism grant for \$812,949 to construct a new multi-age playground, a special event area with picnic tables and BBQs, a new restroom and trails.
 - A \$691,000 grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board to improve nature and river access at Carlson Park, which will create an ADA river lookout trail and observation deck, a parking lot, bilingual interpretive signage, multipurpose court/boat staging area, and two access points to the Mad River.
 - \$1,000,000 from the State through Senator McGuire to ensure completion of the project assisting with both active recreation amenities and natural area restoration.
- Completed the Arcata Ridge Trail, a connected trail from Sunny Brae to West End Road and the Peanut Butter Trail, a more technical mountain biking trail in the Community Forest.
- Broke ground on construction for Phase I of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation.
- Completed the Shay Park Ninja Warrior Playground, and painted basketball courts at Shay and Valley West Parks
- Adopted the City's regulatory framework to comply with SB1383 requirements which will work to eliminate organics from the waste stream.
- Supported the development of and implementation of sports fields and recreation programs as they rebuilt from the pandemic.
- Opened seven additional Electric Vehicle charging stations between lots at the Community Center and 8th and F Street.
- Completed the City's five-year Urban Water Management Plan.
- Resurfaced the Larson Park tennis courts and Arcata Community Center floors.
- Completed the Aldergrove Marsh Restoration Pilot project enhancing aquatic habitat and trail accessibility around the Aldergrove Marsh in partnership with USFWS and Wallace Structures.
- Supported the Valley West neighborhood through many community meetings, planning efforts, overseeing the contract with CUNA and volunteer clean up days.

In addition to the impressive skills she contributes, throughout her first two years Emily has demonstrated a remarkable depth of knowledge for Arcata operations, employees lands and facilities and a commitment to the City of Arcata organization, as well as the Arcata community.

The attached employment agreement is the standard format currently being used with our Department Director positions.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs have been included in the Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget.

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Sinkhorn Contract 05-02-28 (PDF)