



# PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

## City Manager Position Profile



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## City Manager Profile

### THE COMMUNITY

Strategically located within 90 minutes of three major metropolitan communities, Ponca City has the amenities normally found only in larger communities without the hassles of traffic jams, overcrowding, high utility rates and urban crime.

In an ever changing world, risk management is a crucial aspect that every company must explore. No one is risk free, but Ponca City's setting in the heartland is recognizable as a premier "safe haven" location. Their proximity to I-35 and to three major metropolitan areas makes them a valuable attraction both geographically and strategically. Situated in the middle of the Nation, they are a natural location for distribution, manufacturing, research and corporate facilities.

For those seeking balance in their professional and personal lives, Ponca City offers the security and advantages of a small town with the convenience and services of a much larger area. The City's economic opportunities, micropolitan amenities and strategic location have helped make Ponca City one of the top 100 American communities, according to Relocate America.



The community is located in the center of the Oklahoma Gateway economic region of north central Oklahoma, providing easy access to three major metropolitan areas in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Wichita. With its unique flavor of classic Americana, Ponca City has become a magnet for small and middle size companies. Many of these firms are family-owned, including America's 2004 SBA Family-Owned Business of the Year, while others offer a talented and motivated workforce the opportunity to excel. Indeed, the strong partnership between businesses and the community creates an exceptional environment for a desirable professional and personal lifestyle.

Ponca City's manufacturing base is both diverse and innovative. Locally made products include a wide range of home construction products; aerospace components; energy related products; specialty food products and food processing; heating and air conditioning unity, parts and supplies and so much more. Ponca City industries employ state-of-the-art technologies used in steel and metal

fabrication, telecommunications, and energy production. Simply put, Ponca City is not only a benchmark for Oklahoma; it also is widely recognized as a worldwide leader in numerous diversified manufacturing areas.

The innovative economy has also found a safe, secure home in Ponca City. In 2007, the International Economic Development Council presented Ponca City Development Authority with the "Partnership of the Year" award for playing a crucial role, and partnering with OSU and ConocoPhillips, in the development of the University Multispectral Laboratories (UML), the world's first facility dedicated to the multispectral testing of sensors. ConocoPhillips continues to operate a world class energy research facility in the community pioneering next generation energy for the global economy. In addition to the UML, three new hi - technology companies selected Ponca City as the site for new facilities due to their broadband infrastructure, abundance of knowledge workers and lifestyle considerations.

### *History*

Ponca City was created in true Oklahoma fashion during the land run of the late 1800's. On September 16, 1893, homesteaders lined up for a race to claim one of the 160 acre farm sites in the area surrounding what became Ponca City.



Early in the spring of 1893, B.S. Barnes, having heard that the Cherokee Strip was to be opened for settlement, headed for Arkansas City with the hope of building a new city in this frontier area. Barnes had sold his furniture manufacturing plant in Adrian, Michigan, desiring to make his fortune on "The Strip."

After driving for many days, with a team and buggy, over what is now referred to as the counties of Kay, Grant, Garfield, and Noble, he observed a wagon road in Kay County. The road ran from Arkansas City southward and crossed the Arkansas River at a point one mile south of the present Arkansas River Bridge near Ponca City.

The fact that the spring was a good water source and was located on the main road to Osage County caused Barnes to decide that near this point was a logical site for his contemplated city. Barnes went back to Arkansas City to announce the location of the new city and to organize the Ponca Townsite Company.

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, four days after the Oklahoma Land Run, surveyors completed surveying the selected section of land into streets and lots, and the lot drawing began. And such was the beginning of Ponca City. Certificates for lots in Ponca City were sold by the Ponca Townsite Company for \$2 each, and each certificate was good for either one business lot or one residential lot. Over 2,300 certificates were sold. A little girl drew the cards from a box placed on Grand Avenue between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> streets. From these drawings, attendants recorded the certificate owners' names and lot. After the drawing for the lots in the city was completed, Barnes was elected the city's first mayor.

Ponca City's history has been shaped, for the most part, by the ebb and flow of the petroleum industry. The Marland Oil Company, which once controlled approximately 10 percent of the world's oil reserves, was founded by eventual Oklahoma governor and U.S. congressman, E.W. Marland. He founded the 101 Ranch Oil Company located on the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch and drilled his first successful oil well on land he leased from the Ponca Tribe of American Indians in 1911.



Marland's luck and tenacity would fuel growth and wealth that previously was unimaginable on the Oklahoma prairie, and his company virtually built the city from the ground up. Decadent 1920s mansions – including the famed Marland Mansion and Grand Home – were built by Marland and his associates. Because of this period of wealth and affluence, Ponca City has an unusually high concentration of buildings that exemplify the popular Spanish revival architecture of the period, as well as art deco-influenced buildings and homes.

The so-called “Roaring 20s” would come to an end for Ponca City shortly before the Great Depression. After a takeover bid by J.P. Morgan Jr., son of famed financier J.P. Morgan, Marland Oil Company eventually merged with Continental Oil Co. (Conoco) in the late 1920s and would be known as Conoco for more than 70 years. In 2002, Conoco merged with Phillips Petroleum (interestingly, another major petroleum player with roots in northern Oklahoma) to become ConocoPhillips. ConocoPhillips is now one of the five largest oil companies in the world and maintains a significant presence in its historic home state.

## **CITY ORGANIZATION**

Ponca City is a full service community operating under a city charter as a council-manager form of government. The City Commission is comprised of a Mayor and four City Commissioners, elected at large. The City Manager position was recognized by ICMA in 1954. Commission members are elected for three year staggered terms, with the mayor being elected one year, two commissioners the following year and two more commissioners the next year. The Current City Manager has been with the City for 35 years, with the last 15 years as City Manager.

The City Commission has established the City Manager as the chief executive officer of the City responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City. The City Manager will lead an organization that currently has 380 full-time employees and a 2008-09 Operating Budget of \$87.8 million dollars. Ponca City is well known for employing a very high caliber of professional staff. The staff includes two Assistant City Managers as well as qualified professionals in all other management positions. The City provides a full complement of public services to include airport, city clerk/finance, community development, electric, fire, golf course, historical landmarks, human resources, library, municipal lake, parks & recreation, police, public works, solid waste & landfill, technology services, and water & wastewater. The Police Department has 53 full-time sworn officers and 12 other police personnel. The police officers are a member of a bargaining unit (Fraternal Order of Police). The Police Department is led by a Police Chief and Assistant Police Chief. The Fire Department provides a combination of Fire and EMS services. The Fire Department is led by a Fire Chief and 54 firefighters and staff. The firefighters are a member of a bargaining unit (International Association of Fire Fighters). The City has been experiencing significant growth over the past few years. Infrastructure improvements are accepted by the City of Ponca City at time of completion of a maintenance period.

## **CURRENT ISSUES**

Priorities the new City Manager should concentrate his/her efforts on in the first year of employment include:

- Gaining an understanding of the City's diverse business units and their operational budgets, as well as Oklahoma Municipal budget laws; practice fiscal responsibility in order to plan for both current needs and future projections.
- Establishing and building relationships with the Mayor & City Commission, staff, and community leaders, as well as related county, state and national organizations.
- Leading by choosing the right attitude, communicating effectively, being a visionary, seeing the big picture and making things happen.

- Continuing on-going efforts for Ponca City to be recognized across the state and nation for not only completing projects successfully, but for working together as a community to accomplish lasting results...results that will continue to benefit the community for generations to come.

- A politically savvy City Manager who has a reputation for being apolitical and for providing full and timely information to all members of the governing body.

The following are problems and opportunities that will need the attention of the new City Manager:

- Completion of City's Comprehensive Plan
- Completion of Downtown Sidewalk Improvement Project.
- Completion of Recreation Center Complex Construction.
- Continue to Adequately Fund Maintenance and Improvements to City facilities and infrastructure.
- Continue "Pretty Up Ponca" community beautification, cleanliness and "green" efforts.
- Determine Fate of Hutchins Memorial Auditorium.
- Evaluate Wireless Mesh Project Path Forward.
- Protect and Meet Future Water Supply Needs.

### **IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE**

The City Commission of Ponca City is seeking a city management professional who has a track record of successfully dealing with issues in a community of similar size to Ponca City or larger. Candidates should have excellent communication and interpersonal skills and be able to develop strong, positive relationships with both long-time residents and newcomers to the community. Experience with out-sourcing of services and the evaluation of service delivery options will be important. In addition, the new City Manager should possess most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- A strong visionary leader who can anticipate the future impact of decisions and assist the City Commission in making decisions that will guide the future development of the City.
- A working knowledge of the Council/Manager form of government and the roles and relationships inherent in this type of local government.
- A strong working knowledge of municipal financial management including utility and debt financing and a reputation for conservative fiscal management.
- An ability to recruit, select, retain and motivate highly competent employees and a reputation for being able to build an effective team.
- Strong negotiation skills and an ability to represent the City's interests effectively with developers, consultants, contractors, regional and state officials and others.
- A proven leader with a reputation for high ethical standards and for fair and impartial enforcement of administrative policies and regulations.

### **EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE**

Qualifications include a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in public administration, business, government or similar fields and at least seven years of experience as a city manager, assistant city manager or an equivalent position. A Master's Degree in Public or Business Administration or advanced management training at senior executive programs such as a Credentialed City Manager is a plus.

### **COMPENSATION & BENEFITS**

The starting salary and benefits are highly competitive and negotiable, depending upon the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate. Auto allowance and relocation assistance will be provided. The City has an excellent benefit package including, health and dental insurance, ICMA retirement, 10 paid holidays, vacation and sick leave.

### **RESUME SUBMITTALS**

Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter explaining their interest in the position, their resume and five work related references online to: [info@chellconsulting.com](mailto:info@chellconsulting.com) (electronic submittals are preferred) or mail to:

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Attention: Ponca City, City Manager Position

This position is open until filled, however; the first review of applicants will take place on or before October 10, 2008. Following the first review date, resumes will be screened in relation to the criteria outlined in this brochure. The final interview process will be held on or before November 7, 2008. It is the City Commission's desire to have a City Manager employed and on the job the first week of December 2008. For more information please contact Chell Consulting, LLC by calling 405-834-8287 or by visiting our website at: [www.chellconsulting.com](http://www.chellconsulting.com)

The City of Ponca City is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity at all levels of its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a criminal history/credit/driver's license check prior to interview. Under the Oklahoma Public Information Act, information from your resume may be subject to public disclosure.

