

# HIGH PLAINS LIBRARY DISTRICT

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMUNICATION

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Meeting date: September 18, 2018
Type of item: Action
Subject : EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH FIRM SELECTION
Presented by: Mary Heberlee and Interim Director Tony Brewer <a href="mailto:tbrewer@highplains.us">tbrewer@highplains.us</a>
Recommended action: Motion to accept recommendation of the Search Firm committee

### **Background:**

On July 24, the Board directed staff to hire a consulting firm to seek candidates and assist in the hiring process for the new Executive Director. In addition, the Board directed the formation of a screening committee consisting of Mary Heberlee, Sarah Frank, Terri Redden, Bruce Broderius, George Conger and Tony Brewer to review the proposals.

The request for proposals was posted on a website for such firms. In addition, four known firms were sent invitations to submit proposals. Of those four, two responded. At the Board meeting of August 28, there was a concern expressed by the Board as to whether the search had been extended broadly enough. In days following the meeting, Mary Heberlee identified one other consulting firm. Staff sent that firm an RFP. That firm responded with a proposal on September 11.

### **Evaluation process:**

On September 12, the screening committee met to consider the three proposals. They began by identifying the main characteristics being sought in a new executive director. The group then evaluated the three proposals. Each proposal offered something beneficial. The committee chose to focus on identifying the *best, highest quality service*, as opposed to why some proposals were rejected.

The committee identified Bradbury Miller as the best choice based on their proposal and the comments received from Library Directors and Human Resources professionals in Colorado who have worked with them. In fact, of the replies received, Bradbury Miller was recommended unanimously. Here were the comments:

*I have worked with a number of search firms over the years. Bradbury and associates is the one I would recommend because they appear to be fair, and have open communications with both candidates and library board. Their vetting process is thorough.*

*We used Bradbury Miller and had an extremely positive experience. I found them to be responsive, thorough, and very friendly. [Search took 5 months.] The Bradbury's did an excellent job of keeping the process on track. The candidate pool was strong. I believe we started with 14. There were between 6-8 candidates that made it to first interviews and 4 final candidates (2 internals). Additionally, Bradbury was responsive to our request to make sure we had a diverse candidate pool. Based off of our experience I would certainly recommend them.*

*We used Bradbury associates. I have been on multiple executive searches. Bradbury was excellent. Here are a few differences:*

- 1. They ensured that hotel staff were aware that I was coming, so I was greeted at the hotel when I checked in even before meeting any library folks or arriving at first scheduled meeting.*
- 2. They came up with a plan to have 'personal assistants' for each candidate. I.e. a library staff person contacted me before the interview, we met for 30 minutes, they offered me everything from rides to and from places, to calling to provide weather forecasts, to answering any and all questions about the library, etc.*
- 3. I am not sure how much of this was Bradbury and how much was the library – but I would describe the process as very 'humane.' Despite the fact that I interviewed with probably 30 folks over the course of the 3 days – it felt as if they were as concerned about my experience of them as they were about their experience of me. This is a unique approach in my experience.*

*I think Bradbury and Associates were the most professional firm I've worked with. By the way: I've never won a job I competed for with them – my opinion isn't tainted by the halo effect of success. Their questions were relevant and intentional. They treated me with dignity. They have a good stable of talent from which to tempt.*

*I've worked with Bradbury Associates and would highly recommend them. They have a deep pool of qualified applicants and a good track record of working closely with the local community,*

*The Library Commission used Bradbury. I am certainly pleased with how it turned out!*

*I made a similar request earlier this year at a meeting and these are the consultants who were recommended to me that I checked out and got good references for: Bradbury & Associates.*

*When we hired our new director last year we used Bradbury Miller and were satisfied with the results.*

*We used Bradbury Miller for the executive search and they worked with our Board for the entire process. Pros: Their process is quite detailed in terms of seeking input from employees and management, and then having finalist present, etc. ...employees seem to like it. Cons: They wanted quick turn arounds where we needed to rearrange our schedules and manage communications. So maybe you can address that as part of the review process.*

**Recommendation:**

The recommendation of the committee is to extend a contract to Bradbury Miller.