



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

August 12, 2021

City Council President Joseph P. Lopes and
Honorable Members of the City Council
133 William St.
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Council President Lopes and Honorable Members:

I submit for your consideration a request to hire the Department of Resilience and Environmental Stewardship's selected candidate for the position of Environmental Project Manager, Courtney Cohen, at Grade M-12, Step 4 to compensate her commensurate with her expertise and decades of relevant experience. A detailed justification for the request from Director Michele Paul is attached to this communication. In sum, it is not feasible for Ms. Cohen and her family to relocate to New Bedford from Dartmouth, and the recently enacted ten percent pay reduction for non-residents would prevent Ms. Cohen from accepting the position. As she is the most qualified candidate to emerge from an exhaustive search, I respectfully request that you agree to on-board Ms. Cohen at the higher step, so that her salary would be roughly equivalent (two percent lower) to the Step 1 salary for a New Bedford resident. Otherwise, she will not accept the position, and we are likely to have difficulty finding another suitable candidate.

Ms. Paul and Ms. Cohen will be available at the meeting to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jonathan F. Mitchell
JFM/crc

cc: Ms. Paul
Ms. Cohen



MAYOR
JON MITCHELL

Department of Environmental Stewardship

133 William Street · Room 304 · New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

Telephone: (508) 991.6188

Conservation • Environmental Stewardship • Resilience

August 3, 2021

Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor
City of New Bedford
133 William Street
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

Dear Mayor Mitchell:

I am excited to recommend Courtney Cohen for the position of Environmental Project Manager. After an exhaustive search, during which the only other two qualified candidates ultimately withdrew their names from consideration, Courtney was selected as the only remaining qualified candidate, and she is highly qualified, though she resides out of town. Courtney lives with her family in South Dartmouth, just over a mile from New Bedford. She has children who attend Dartmouth Public Schools and her parents who also live nearby in Dartmouth provide much of the Cohens' support network. I recognize that the recently-modified Residency Ordinance requires any non-resident employee to accept a 10% reduction in pay for the first 10 years of service. Were Courtney to begin at a Step 1, the 10% penalty would prevent her from being financially able to accept the position.

Courtney has a Bachelor's Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering and is uniquely qualified with experience in local, state, and federal environmental regulations including the Massachusetts Contingency Plan. She has worked in and around New Bedford for twenty years and is very familiar with its environmental assets and challenges. With five active EPA Brownfield grant programs and a multi-year cleanup of the AVX site underway, it is certainly in the City's best interest to fill this key position with a candidate with the proper experience and management skillset. I am hopeful that you will support a request to the City Council that given Courtney's 20 years of professional experience and qualifications suited to the position of Environmental Project Manager, she be onboarded at a Step 4. This will still result in a starting salary 2% below the full Step 1 rate and a cost savings to the City.

Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to call me at 508-816-5777 or email me at michele.paul@newbedford-ma.gov.

Sincerely,

Michele Paul, LSP

Director, Resilience and Environmental Stewardship, City of New Bedford



133 William Street-Room 304, New Bedford, MA 02740 - Telephone 508-991-6188