



POSITION RE-OPENED

Still Looking for the Right Candidate

CITY MANAGER POSITION AVAILABLE

Apply by June 14, 2019

Welcome to Clewiston, Florida!

If you are looking for a great community away from the hustle and bustle of the big city lights, a place where you will find peace, tranquility and a great city commission to work for, then read on!

Clewiston is in the center of everything, located in south central Florida, approximately 75 minutes from the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf Coast beaches. It is a rural community with relatively easy access to suburban and urban centers which offer a wide range of entertainment, shopping and dining opportunities.

For those who enjoy the outdoors, it is hard to find anything more pleasant than grabbing a fishing pole and taking a boat



out onto Lake Okeechobee, Florida's largest, and the 2nd largest fresh water lake in the Continental United States. It is renown as the "Bass Capital of the World."

The serenity and scenery will put your heart at peace with the world. Area views are stunning! Wildlife is common and ranges from heron to raccoons, possums and armadillos. Alligators can be found nearby but are not something to be concerned about. Clewiston is surrounded by sugarcane fields and is the corporate home of the U.S. Sugar Corporation. As a result, the city is widely known as "America's Sweetest Town."

Clewiston's biggest celebration is the annual Sugar Festival. Founded in the 1930's, it celebrates a successful harvest and is a multiple-day event taking place in early to mid-March.

The Festival is a place where friends, family, and neighbors gather. Visitors travel from all over the region, state and beyond, for live entertainment, cane-grinding, a car show, a 5K run, various games, arts and crafts vendors, and a variety of food booths offering the best of local cuisine. During this time as well, the Friends of the Clewiston Public Library hosts their Annual Book Sale and Silent Auction for which various individuals, businesses and community members donate items. The funds raised at this event support programming and educational services by the library. And, of course, it would not be Clewiston without the bass fishing tournament.

Lake Okeechobee is directly accessible from Clewiston and is a natural wonder, covering 730 square miles. The lake's beauty has inspired artists for decades, and has been featured in films, novels, and songs. It is a beautiful place

to relax, bird watch, and fish. It is particularly known for having largemouth bass. Bluegill, catfish, pickerel, and crappie are also common.

The lake is circled by the 109-mile Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail which is part of the Florida Trail. The latter begins in the Big Cypress Swamp and winds its way through Florida all the way to Pensacola. When complete, the trail will stretch for approximately 1,300 miles.

One of Clewiston's nearby hidden gems is the Dinner Island Ranch, located 29 miles south. There you will find some of Florida's native wildlife—falcons, hawks, owls, deer, turkeys, gators, and, for the lucky few, a panther or a bobcat.

The Clewiston Museum highlights the important role of sugarcane, cattle, commercial fishing, and the Seminole Indians played in the area's history. South of Clewiston is another important museum: The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Seminole Indian Museum, which preserves the Seminole culture and history.

Other nearby attractions feature the Lion Country Safari (where one can experience many animals of the African plains) and Gatorama. Built by legendary Florida Cracker and gator hunter Cecil Clemens in 1957, the latter retains its swampy Florida charm, and is likely the largest alligator farm in the world.

Clewiston is perfectly charming, if a bit subdued. What makes it truly special are its people. The community is vibrant, warm and welcoming, and proud of its history. It enjoys a small town feel, and if you are not "from here",



it does not matter. The community will quickly embrace you and make you one of its own.

One of the major benefits of working in Clewiston is living here. Based on a Sperling's cost of living index where the US average is 100, Clewiston's scores 85.1. The median home value is \$118,000, and while the housing supply is not enormous, an attractive home can be purchased for between \$200,000 and \$350,000. The crime rate is low and decreasing every year. The city offers several abundant beautiful parks including Civic Park, Candy Cane Park, Hidden Park, Levee Park, Trinidad Park, Waterworks Park, Woodworks Park and Ridgewood Park to mention a few. The city also has its Clewiston Performing Arts Center (CPAC) which was formed to enable talented members of the community to gain knowledge of the performing arts. CPAC is now in its 18th year and over 150 children register annually for Ballet, Tap & Jazz, Tumbling, Latin Dance, and Beginning Movement (for children 3 – 5 years old).

The City offers a wide assortment of sports facilities and programs which include tennis courts, racket ball courts, pickle ball courts, youth center, public pool, splash pad, and league team programs for youth and adults. The city owns an 18-hole championship golf course. All these amenities make it clear that Clewiston is dedicated to building and enriching its community.

In terms of education, youth can get a good education within Clewiston's Public or Private School System beginning with Pre-K through high school. Clewiston High School offers students the opportunity to dual-enroll with Palm Beach State College, Florida SouthWestern State College or Florida Gulf Coast University. Nearly a third of the students at Clewiston High School take advanced placement courses. Clewiston residents have ready access to, among others, the University of Florida (ranked as one of the ten best public universities in the country), Florida Southwestern State College, Palm Beach State College, Florida Atlantic University, Keiser University (ranked second nationally for health-related programs), and the University of Miami.

In case you want to travel, it is easy to plan a weekend getaway, or a much longer trip. West Palm Beach and Fort Myers are both just over an hour's drive from Clewiston while Miami and Fort Lauderdale are about 90 minutes away. All four have major international airports. Fort Myers is a major tourist destination, with the winter estates of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, as well as several museums and a nature center, and nearby beaches. West Palm Beach has the largest art museum in Florida (the Norton Museum of Art), as well as theaters, museums, festivals (SunFest is a big one, with over 275,000 visitors), an opera, and a film festival. Those who love shopping and/or the Atlantic Ocean beaches will find West Palm Beach to be a treasure. All are within 90 minutes driving as are the cruise ports at Miami and Fort Lauderdale (ranked first and third respectively in the world in terms of passenger volume). The Port of Palm Beach offers shorter cruises to the Bahamas.

With access to Florida's natural beauty, and just about anything you could want, Clewiston is a warm, welcoming community you will quickly fall in love with. Apply today and see why it's called "America's Sweetest Town".

HISTORY

The first inhabitants of Clewiston were local Indians who camped on the shores of Lake Okeechobee and fished for the lake's abundance of fish. This is still a major draw to the region, with modern fishermen taking advantage of the Roland Martin Marina and Resort as well as experienced fishing guides. The current site of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regional office served as a base of operations for scores of professional fishermen as late as the 1920's.

The Clewiston area also attracted its share of pioneer farmers, most notably a temporary settlement of Japanese farmers who began to grow vegetables in the fertile lakeside soil around 1915. The first permanent development was undertaken in 1920 by John and Marion O'Brien and Tampa banker, Alonzo Clewis, who purchased a substantial tract of land surrounding the lakeshore and established a town. The O'Briens and Clewis soon had a railroad line, the M. H. and C., built to connect Clewiston with the Atlantic Coast Line terminus at Moore Haven. They then commissioned the well-known town planner from Boston, John Nolen, to create a plan for the city. Nolen completed the General Plan of Clewiston June 1, 1925. The firm of Elliott and Harmon from Peoria and Memphis was retained to survey, map and direct construction of the streets and canals. Many of the early settlers remained to become permanent residents, founding schools and churches, opening stores and establishing other businesses and professional services.

During World War II, Clewiston was home to Number 5 British Flying Training School—one of seven flight schools where U.S. and British pilots trained together. While the city suffered a downturn after the war, the citrus groves and expansion of winter vegetable farming and ranching operations helped it recover. The area experienced another growth period with the expansion of the sugarcane industry in the 1960s when large sugar farms developed around Lake Okeechobee and became the foundation for Clewiston’s local economy. In recent years, freezes in north Florida caused more acreage to be being planted in citrus. However, Clewiston's largest industry was, and is, sugar and thanks to the activities of the U.S. Sugar Corporation the city became known as "America's Sweetest Town," Clewiston is home to the largest sugar factory/refinery in the world and welcomes its growing numbers of winter visitors and fishermen.

DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table 1 for Clewiston Demographics.

CLIMATE

Clewiston boasts a comfortable year-round climate that is humid and mild. The seasons are not markedly different in temperature, with highs of around 74 °F degrees in the winter and 92 °F in the summer. The low temperatures range from around 55 °F degrees in the winter to around 73 °F degrees in the summer. Clewiston receives annual precipitation (none of which is snow) of approximately 53 inches per year, while the US national average is 39 inches per year. Precipitation tends to occur primarily between June and September, though storms are typically relatively

Table 1: Clewiston Demographics

Estimated Population: 7,943			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	77.3%	0 to 15	22.6%
Black	13.0%	15 to 25	21.4%
Asian	1.6%	25 to 45	21.0%
Native American/ Pacific Islander	0.0%	45 to 65	21.6%
Two or More Races	8.1%	65 to 85	10.9%
Total	100%	Over 85	2.5%
Hispanic (all races)	51.9%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	69.6%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	12.5%

Other Statistics	
Median Age–Clewiston	33.6
Median Age–U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	17.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

short in duration. On average, the city has 252 sunny days annually. Hurricanes are relatively rare and, tend not to cause major damage due to Clewiston’s inland location.

GEOGRAPHY

Located in the Florida Heartland region, the city of Clewiston sits on the south shore of Lake Okeechobee in northeast Hendry County. The city is centrally located in south Florida, lying 60 miles east of Fort Myers and Cape

Coral, which are on the Gulf of Mexico, and 60 miles west of Palm Beach, which is on the Atlantic Ocean. Clewiston covers 4.7 square miles, almost all of which is land. The city lies an average of 16.4 feet above sea level.

COMMERCE

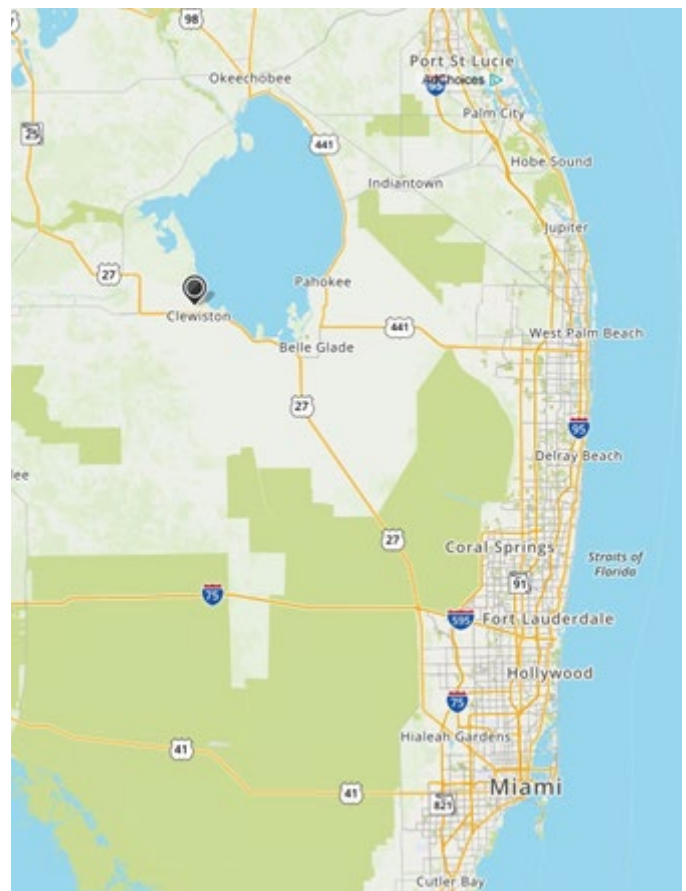
The city's commerce is based primarily on the U.S. Sugar Corporation with its 2,500 employees. Governmental entities such as the Hendry County School Board and Hendry County are the next largest employers.

THE GOVERNMENT

The City of Clewiston operates under the Commission-Manager form of government. The City Commission is composed of five members who serve staggered terms. In early November of even numbered years, three commissioners are elected. The two candidates with the greatest number of votes receive four year terms while the candidate with the third highest number of votes receives a two year term.

The Mayor and Vice Mayor are chosen from the elected officials. Current Commission members have served for twenty, sixteen, four and two years with the fifth member elected last November. While the opinions of the Commission Members may differ, they get along well and respect the staff. Once an issue is dealt with, they move on.

The Commission appoints the City Manager (who oversees the day-to-day operations of the city), and the City Attorney. The city provides traditional services such as code enforcement, community development, police,



fire, public works, and recreation. Additionally, the city offers electricity, library, solid waste, water, and wastewater services to Clewiston residents. The city also has a small community redevelopment agency.

The 2019 general fund budget is \$7,998,878, and the total budget is \$25,400,142. The largest enterprise fund is electric (\$11.7 million) followed by water and sewer (\$3.9 million) and solid waste (\$1.5 million). Clewiston has 94 full-time employees and 39 part-time employees. None of the employees are unionized.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Clewiston is a great place to live and be the City Manager. It is financially sound. The Commission is good to work

with and wants a strong, experienced manager. That said, this job is not without its challenges. The next manager will be busy.

The first challenge is to capitalize on Clewiston's vast potential. The city has not made a great deal of progress in the last ten years and the Council wants that to change. Fortunately, many of the needed pieces are slowly falling into place. State Road 80 /U.S. 27 traverses the state going from West Palm Beach to Fort Myers passing directly through Clewiston. Its expansion to four lanes will be completed in the relatively near future, and it is anticipated that it will be a major transportation corridor.

The city has a 30-acre commerce park which is largely unoccupied. Hendry County is selling its airport (Airglades) to Florida Cargo Fresh (a partnership of U.S. Sugar and Hilliard Brothers) When completed, Airglades will become Airglades International Airport (AIA) and a new 11,000-foot runway will be constructed to support cargo shipments to and from South and Central America. AIA is a \$650 million project that is anticipated to add 1,000 new jobs in the area.

New housing development is being considered and needs to happen. For its part, the city wants to enhance its brand/ image, particularly along SR-80 /U.S. 27, and capitalize on these opportunities. Working closely with U.S. Sugar (which owns 190,000 acres in the area) will be critical. It will also be important to find ways to get a higher percentage of the 25,000 vehicles that pass through Clewiston every day to stop and spend money. Economic development and bringing new businesses to the city will be essential. In short, Clewiston needs a vision its residents and businesses

will embrace and which will be implemented to drive it forward.

The next manager will be expected to review the city government and ensure it is operating optimally. That will include looking at policies and procedures as well as operations. A corollary issue is retaining staff. With the economy booming, others can offer higher salaries and the city is losing key people. Finally, the manager will need to focus on infrastructure, ensuring what the city has is maintained as well as planning for future needs.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Clewiston is looking for a self-starter, a great leader, a strong manager and someone with vision. The individual will be outgoing, confident, positive, proactive, responsive and involved. He/she will be achievement oriented and a consensus builder who is approachable and easy to communicate with. The manager will not just be someone who works for the City Commission, but someone who will partner with the Commission Members and serve as a trusted advisor. The Commission realizes that the manager, by virtue of his/her training, knowledge and experience, can provide valuable input, and they would like someone who will be candid and straightforward. Thus, he/she will need to be someone who is not afraid to diplomatically (and privately to the degree possible) tell the elected officials when something is not a good idea and why. They do not want a "yes" person. Further, the individual will ensure that all the Commission Members get the same information at the same time and that they are well informed. No surprises is the rule to be followed.

Honesty and integrity will be critical as will having strong interpersonal and communications skills. The best candidate will recognize listening is just as important as speaking and articulating a position. The individual will be effective in conveying his/her thoughts to the most highly educated and to those who are not. Being adept at social media is necessary. The selected candidate will be friendly and very customer-service oriented. Clewiston is a small town after all.

Given U.S. Sugar's presence in the community, the City Manager must be able to form public-private partnerships to advance the community. Intergovernmental skills are also needed. Although LaBelle is the county seat for Hendry County, Clewiston is the largest city and working together with the county, state agencies and the federal government will be a priority.

The next manager will understand the importance of the day-to-day activities but will not let it consume all of his/her attention and preclude preparation for the future and long-term success. He/she will work with the Commission to develop a vision as well as strategies to implement that vision. Once the Commission has approved them, the individual will need to make things happen in an efficient and expeditious manner.

The next manager will have high expectations for the staff, be realistic, and set high standards. He/she will need to have a track record of hiring excellent staff, and be someone who can find the appropriate balance between delegation and direct involvement. The individual will realize that one person cannot do it all and will utilize subordinate staff, and delegate. Mentoring and being able to develop

staff will be important. At the same time, the manager will expect results and hold people accountable.

The ideal candidate will have a minimum of ten years of progressively responsible experience in public sector management. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, with a major in administration, management or a related field, is required. Skill in economic development and finance will be important as will be intergovernmental relations. Experience working and negotiating with those in the private sector is a significant plus. Experience obtaining grants (and other sources of other people's money) is a plus as is having work in a rural area and being familiar with agricultural issues.

Finally, the next manager will realize that Clewiston has endured and survived a multi-year rural recession and now has tremendous tremendous potential. As such, he/she will understand the importance of preparing the City for its bright future without losing what makes it unique.

COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$125,000 to \$190,000. The actual salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The City Manager will have a defined contribution 401A pension and a 457 plan is offered with a 3% match.

THE MOST RECENT CITY MANAGER

Historically, City Managers have had reasonably long tenures. The last three stayed 11 years, 3 years, and 6 years respectively.

RESIDENCY

The city charter requires the City Manager to become a resident of Clewiston within three months of starting work.

HOW TO APPLY

Email your cover letter and resume ASAP to Recruit43@cb-asso.com. Final closing date is June 14, 2019. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or David Collier at (772) 220-4320.

INTERNAL CANDIDATES

We do not anticipate any internal candidates. The current manager is a prior manager who came out of retirement to serve as the interim manager.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Florida Public Records Act, all applicants are subject to disclosure upon receipt. As a practical matter, we do not expect extensive media coverage.

THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between June 15th and July 21st. Finalists will be selected on July 22nd. A reception and interviews will be held on August 8th and 9th. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Clewiston is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply. A veteran's preference will be awarded per Florida law.

Clewiston is committed to hiring the right person and hopes that individual will have a long tenure with the city. It recognizes that quality can be costly, and is willing to pay near the top of the salary range for the right person.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the city visit:

<https://www.clewiston-fl.gov/>

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES
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