



## Director of Human Resources City of West Palm Beach, FL

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Position Open Until Filled,  
Applications Screened as They Arrive

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If you like a fast-paced, demanding and progressive environment where creativity, hard work and initiative are valued, this job is for you!

### Background

Located on Florida's east coast approximately 75 miles north of Miami, the City of West Palm Beach is a diverse and vibrant community with sunny palm-lined streets, scenic waterfront, quaint shopping districts, historic neighborhoods, and many outdoor festival events – in other words, a slice of paradise.

The Downtown Retail and Entertainment District is alive with activity. Every Thursday evening the City hosts the award-winning “Clematis by Night” where visitors and locals mingle among arts and crafts vendors while enjoying live entertainment. On Saturday mornings you can visit the Greenmarket on the waterfront. For theater and performing arts, the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts is the premier location while the Norton Museum of Art houses a world-renowned collection of European, American, Chinese and contemporary art. Fine dining is available at a wide variety of exquisite restaurants.



families will enjoy the Palm Beach Zoo at Dreher Park and the South Florida Science Museum. Or they can take advantage of nearby world-class golf courses and the ocean. The opportunities for water sports in the immediate vicinity are outstanding. SunFest, Florida's largest waterfront music and art festival, takes place in West Palm Beach each May.

Travelers will enjoy Palm Beach International Airport, an extremely attractive and pleasant jumping off point to the Bahamas, Canada and the rest of the world. An hour to the south lies Fort Lauderdale, its attractions and its cruise port.

West Palm Beach offers a wide variety of housing. Prices range from less than \$100,000 to the millions depending on location, construction, square footage, features, schools and neighborhood. In the current market, a nice home can be purchased for between \$200,000 and \$300,000. Overall, Palm Beach County schools are quite good. In fact, in 2012 U.S. News and World Reports rated two of the County's high schools (Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach and Suncoast Community High School in neighboring Riviera Beach) among the nation's top 60 public high schools. The area also has some excellent private high schools.

The bottom line is West Palm Beach offers some incredible opportunities and is a great place to live, work and play. After work, whether you like the sunshine, outdoor activities or eclectic storefronts, the subdued elegance of West Palm Beach is sure to captivate you.

## History

By the late 1870s and 1880s, a few hundred lived in the area that was to become West Palm Beach. Most were engaged in growing tropical fruits and vegetables for shipment to the North. At the time the area boasted a hotel, the "Cocoanut House," a church, and a post office. In 1893 Henry Flagler platted the City as a community to house the servants working in the two grand hotels on the neighboring island of Palm Beach. About that time, Flagler's Florida East Coast Railroad arrived.

On November 5, 1894, 78 people met at the "Calaboose" (the first jail and police station) and voted to incorporate the Town of West Palm Beach in what was then Dade County. West Palm Beach thus became the first incorporated



municipality in South Florida. The town council quickly addressed the building codes and the tents and shanties were replaced by brick, brick veneer, and stone buildings. The City grew rapidly in the 1920s as part of the Florida land boom. Many of the City’s landmark structures and preserved neighborhoods were constructed during this period.

The City fell into a deep depression after the 1928 Hurricane devastated the area and ended the already faltering land boom of the era. The 1930s were a quiet time for the area, which saw population growth slow and property values decline to levels lower than during the 1920’s. The City recovered with the onset of World War II and the construction of Palm Beach Air Base where thousands of airmen and army personnel were brought to train.

The 1950s saw another boom in population when many of the soldiers and airmen returned to live. Also, the advent of air conditioning accelerated growth, as year round living in the tropical climate became more palatable. Through the 1950s, nearly all the city’s residents lived within a narrow six-block wide strip from the south to north end and the primary shopping district remained downtown, centered on Clematis Street.

In the 1960s, Palm Beach County’s first enclosed shopping mall, the Palm Beach Mall, and an indoor arena were completed. During the 1970s and 1980s the City declined as urban sprawl continued to drain resources and business away from the old downtown area. By the early 1990s the downtown was characterized by high vacancy rates and urban blight.

Since then, the City has surged forward with developments such as CityPlace. Many new office buildings have sprung up and the entertainment and shopping district has been reborn. The City also placed emphasis on neighborhood development and revitalization. At the same time, new gated communities and other projects have developed to the north and west of the downtown.

### Commerce

West Palm Beach has transformed itself from a sleepy bedroom town into a burgeoning city thanks to a thriving downtown. New civic, cultural and residential projects have spawned millions of dollars more in current and pledged investments. In the past decade, \$1.4 billion has been invested in the City’s downtown area. With 250,000 square feet of retail, dozens of restaurants and a busy nightlife, the Clematis Street area has, year after year, witnessed significant additions and more are on the way.

### Demographics

U.S. Census data shows the population of West Palm Beach to have been 101,000 in 2011. That is up 23.1% over the 2000 population of 82,103. The City has 40,789 households, with 2.3 persons per household and a median household income \$44,905. The per capita income was \$29,700. 18.2% of the population was below the poverty level. Overall, the population is slightly older than the rest of the United States. See Table I

Racially, 60% of the population was white, 31% black, 2% Asian and the remainder were other races or two or more races. 22% were Hispanic (all races).

The latest available Census estimates 70% of residents spoke English as their first language while 20% spoke Spanish, 8% an Indo-European language and rest spoke some other

Table I: Population by Age

Age Group	Percent
Under 5	6.1%
5 to 15	10.3%
15 to 25	13.4%
25 to 35	15.6%
35 to 45	13.6%
45 to 55	13.0%
55 to 65	11.7%
65 to 75	8.0%
75 to 85	5.6%
85 +	2.7%

Median Age	37.9
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Source: U.S. Census

language. 85% of those over the age of 25 have at least a high school degree while 29% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

### Geography

West Palm Beach is located on the Intracoastal Waterway in Southeast Florida and is approximately 75 miles north of Miami. It covers 58.2 square miles of which 55.1 square miles is land and 3.1 square miles is water. The City is an average of 21 feet above sea level.

Due to vast areas of swampland immediately to the west of the City's downtown, historically growth occurred to the north and south in a linear fashion. Until the 1960s, the City was not very wide but over 100 blocks in length. Large scale development finally occurred to the west of the City with improved access and drainage. However, the city boundaries have not expanded a great deal with the exception of the "Water Catchment Area", an uninhabited area in the northwest part of the City that serves as a reservoir for its drinking supply.

### The Climate

West Palm Beach has a tropical monsoon climate. Summers are warm and wet while November through April tends to be dry and quite pleasant. See Table II for yearly temperatures and precipitation.

Hurricanes pass through the area from time to time, but tend to be relatively tame. With current construction standards, properties are better protected against storm damage. Further, a hurricane must be at least a category 3 level and the eye must pass within 40 miles for property to suffer serious damage. Since 1900, two such storms occurred in the West Palm Beach vicinity.

### The Government

Since 1991 West Palm Beach has operated under the strong mayor form of government. The system combines the strong political leadership of a Mayor, who is responsible for running the affairs of the City, with the legislative authority of a five member City Commission. The Mayor serves a four year term and is limited to two terms. Commissioners serve staggered two year terms and for three full terms. Historically, the government has been characterized by stability. The City's fourth Mayor since 1991 started her first term in 2011. Over the same period, two of the five commission members have served multiple terms. In fact, one of the current commissioners was first elected in 1999 and another in 2002.

The City Administrator provides leadership and administrative support to the Mayor in the administration and execution of policies and objectives; develops and recommends solutions to community problems for consideration by the Mayor and City Commission. The individual also plans, develops, and monitors programs to meet current and future physical, social, and cultural needs of the citizens of West Palm Beach. The current City Administrator was initially appointed in 1999 and has served under all four of the City's strong Mayors.

The City provides all the standard services including Engineering, Fire Rescue, Housing and Community Development, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, Police, Public Works, Stormwater and Utilities. It also provides Library, Parking, and Waterfront services. Overall, the City has 1,432 FTEs, a general fund budget of \$169 million and a total budget of \$572 million. Financially the City has largely recovered from the effects of the Great Recession. For example, the five furlough days all employees have had to take for the past few years will be restored in the next fiscal year. The City has five bargaining units and all but approximately 100 of the City's employees are unionized.

Table II: West Palm Beach Temperatures and Precipitation

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Normal High °F	74.8	76.3	78.9	81.9	85.9	88.7	90.3	90.3	90.1	85.2	80.2	76.4
Normal Low °F	56.9	59.3	62.3	66.0	71.1	74.4	75.6	76.0	75.3	71.8	65.6	60.0
Precipitation in Inches	3.13	2.82	4.59	3.66	4.51	8.30	5.76	7.95	8.34	5.13	4.65	3.38

Source: NOAA





## The Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department has 13 employees in four divisions: Compensation and Employment (four employees), Employee Relations (three employees), HRIS and Benefits (two employees), and Administration (the Director, an administrative assistant, a receptionist and a trainer). The Department's total number of employees is about half of what it was just a few years ago. To compensate, it has two third party, fulltime, on-site people (one provided by the agent of record and one by the health insurance company) to assist with claims resolution and other benefits matters. It has also automated some of its key HR functions. For example, all employment applications are presently completed on-line and the preliminary screening is automated. One somewhat unusual function is that the Department handles all EEOC complaints internally instead of using outside legal counsel. The Human Resources Director also oversees a fulltime medical clinic (operated by a third party under contract) for the benefit the City's employees, retirees and their families. In addition to the automation, the Department has also made great strides in terms of streamlining processes.

Overall the Department is respected. Its staff members are committed and very serious about doing their jobs. They want to be proactive and solve problems before they become issues but the amount of work they face often makes them reactive. They take pride in their work and truly want to provide the best possible service to the public and employees. Camaraderie exists among the staff and they genuinely like and respect each other. Relations with the unions are generally very good and the clinic has been a huge success.

## The Ideal Candidate

The City is seeking a bright, proactive, dynamic and seasoned professional with experience in all aspects of human resources. The individual

will not only be a leader but also someone who will be a working supervisor who will roll up his/her sleeves and dives in. City Administration expects the next director to delegate and hold the staff accountable but also expects the director to be involved and knowledgeable of the issues and what is going on in the department. The Director will be someone who is a team builder both inside and outside the department. He/she will understand the importance of collaboration and recognition when a job is well done. The individual will work closely with other elements of city government – the Mayor, City Commission, City Administrator and department directors. He/she will act as a trusted advisor and consultant to them while also serving as an advocate for and a supporter of the Human Resources Department. Customer service will not be simply a catchy phrase but a way of life for this individual. Everyone should feel welcome coming to HR while also feeling they will be respected, heard and treated fairly. The next Director will understand the importance of process without being a bureaucrat. Finding ways to be helpful and to get to “yes” will be critical. Patience, empathy and understanding will also be important but the individual will not be a push over. Being consistent as well as firm and fair will be keys to success. The individual will listen to both sides and, if they conflict, make the best decision for the City and the employee. He/she will also be comfortable making a decision. Ideally all the facts will be available, all sides heard and a good decision made.

Communications skills will be important. As such, the Director will be a strong writer and have outstanding verbal abilities – specifically, being able to explain complex concepts to everyone senior decision makers as well as to junior laborers. As such, the ideal candidate will be a good listener and recognize its value in the communications process. Finally in terms of communications, the individual will be an exceptional presenter. Most importantly, the director will use those skills to keep both those he/she reports to and those that report to him/her fully informed.

The next Director will thrive in a fast paced and ever changing environment. As such the ideal candidate must be energetic, motivated and able to multitask. Anyone who thinks this job would be a good way to transition into retirement will not last a week.

Although this position reports directly to the City Administration, the Director will have fairly regular

contact with the Mayor and to a more limited degree, the City Commission. As such it will be important to understand how to function in a political environment without becoming part of it.

The minimum requirements are a Bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management or a related field and ten (10) years of progressively responsible human resources experience. The latter will include experience in compensation, benefits administration, collective bargaining, management/organizational development, and labor/employee relations. Five (5) years of supervisory / management experience, or any equivalent combination of training and experience is also required. Certification as SPHR preferred. The successful applicant must have or obtain a Florida driver's license.

## Compensation & Benefits

Depending on qualifications, the starting salary for this position is in the range of \$101,164 to \$151,951.

The essential elements for the City's benefit package are:

- Executive Health & Dental Insurance with reimbursable out of the pocket expenses for Employee & Family .
- City operated Health Center with no co-pays.
- Vision
- 457 Deferred Compensation Plan.
- Defined Compensation Plan 401 (a) with a 6.5% City match.
- Life Insurance (equal to one times annual salary), plus \$100,000 additional life insurance.
- Flexible Spending Account (Voluntary)
- 457 Deferred compensation Plan (Voluntary)
- Defined Contribution Plan 401(a) with a 6.5% City match.
- Paid holidays (11).
- Vacation Annual Leave.
- Sick leave (10 days annually).



- -Management Leave (4 days annually prorated based on Date of Hire)
- Employee & Family Health.

## The Prior Director

The original director retired after seven years with the City. This is a re-opened recruitment, and the previous candidate chosen to succeed the director resigned shortly after accepting the position in order to pursue another opportunity.

## Residency

Position does not require residency within City limits but it is strongly preferred.

## How to Apply

E-mail your resume to [Recruit34@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit34@cb-asso.com) as soon as possible. Applicants will be screened as they arrive and

forwarded immediately to the City so do not hesitate. Questions should be directed to Rick Conner at (915) 227-7002 or David Collier at (772) 220-4320. Applicant materials sent to the firm via regular U.S. mail or facsimile will not be considered.

## Other Important Information

West Palm Beach is an equal opportunity employer and minorities and women are encouraged to apply. Under Florida law, all applications are a public record and subject to disclosure. Veteran's preference will be awarded if applicable and according to Florida Law.

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING



Director of Human Resources