



**SOCKWELL**  
*partners*

June 6, 2013

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

Ms. Shelley Book  
Mecklenburg County  
Recruitment Program Administrator  
Business Support Services Agency – HR  
[Shelley.book@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:Shelley.book@mecklenburgcountync.gov)

Dear Shelley:

Thank you for inviting us to submit an RFQ for your search for a new County Manager. We believe we are uniquely positioned to assist Mecklenburg County in this assignment.

Located in Charlotte, we have a 30-year track record of client satisfaction. We recruit for a variety of clients including for-profit companies, nonprofits, public, private, and public-private partnership organizations. Our clients are dispersed across the country; however, we have a wealth of experience in CEO searches for local clients. We have worked with the CMS Board of Education to find two superintendents and multiple senior administrators. We also have recruited CEOs for the Charlotte Regional Partnership and the United Way of the Central Carolinas – both receive significant public dollars.

We are comfortable working with public sector clients with high-profile assignments. When we conducted the search for the United Way, the organization was in the midst of considerable community angst over leadership and governance issues.

We take particular pride in making a difference in our home community and would be honored to assist in the search for Harry Jones' replacement. The following pages profile our firm, experience, approach, sourcing/screening practices and pricing. Thank you again for involving us in this stage of the process.

Sincerely,

Lyttleton Rich  
Managing Director

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## SOCKWELL PARTNERS

### *Our Firm*

- Founded in 1982, a mid-sized retained executive search firm in Charlotte with a staff of eleven, including six directors, and three consultants.
- Clients include nonprofit organizations, Fortune 500 companies, mid-cap and emerging companies, portfolio companies of private equity and venture capital firms:
  - Experience spans a range of industries with specialties in nonprofit including government entities, chambers of commerce/economic development, real estate, healthcare, manufacturing/distribution, and financial services.
  - Functional specialties include Board of Directors, CEOs, Presidents, Executive Directors, COOs, CFOs, CIOs, Heads of Sales/Marketing, Operations and Human Resources.
- Member of the Association of Executive Search Consultants, an invitation-only international consortium of the world's 250 leading retained search firms.

We undertake each assignment with the desire to have a meaningful impact on our client's business and the people whom we touch during the search. We are quite diligent about understanding a client's organization and its evolving culture. We strive to be very informed so we can create a compelling "story" to use in recruiting outstanding candidates and to clearly understand the type of person who will be successful. As we identify candidates, we spend many hours in assessment – to ensure our client meets only candidates whom we believe are qualified and are also recruitable. This commitment and care have allowed us to build a reputation for success.

The following key metrics demonstrate our track record:

- *Accuracy* – the successful candidate was a product of our initial candidate slate (usually three or four people) in more than 84% of our engagements. On average, our clients interview only 4.4 candidates before making the hire. Other search firms often have to introduce ten or more candidates before finding one suitable.
- *Completion Rate* – our completion rate since 1982 is 97%. Many large retained executive search firms finish between 65% and 75% of their assignments.
- *Stick Rate* – our candidates make lasting contributions to our clients. Three years after search completion, more than 81% of our candidates are still on board.
- *Longevity* – since our company's inception, our guarantee (that we will replace the successful candidate at no additional fee should s/he leave the company, for any reason, in the first year of his/her employment) has come into play in less than one percent of our 1000+ engagements.

## ***Managing Directors/Directors***

### **Elizabeth Denton**

Elizabeth joined Sockwell Partners as a consultant in 2005. Since then, she has completed nearly 100 search assignments for clients in the not-for-profit, financial services, manufacturing, healthcare, real estate and nonprofit sectors. She works from our Chapel Hill office.

Prior to joining Sockwell, Elizabeth spent eight years in corporate communications for financial services firms, including a leading investment bank, and for a NY-based law firm. A native of Charlotte, Elizabeth graduated from Wake Forest University with a B.S. in communications. She currently serves on the council of the United Way Young Leaders and is active with the YWCA of Central Carolinas.

### **Adam Elmore**

Adam Elmore joined Sockwell in 2011. He brought more than five years of executive search experience where he had focused in a variety of industries including not-for-profit, real estate, manufacturing, distribution, financial services, public accounting, wealth management and utilities. He has been involved in the successful completion of more than 75 searches with clients ranging in size from \$10MM in revenue to the Fortune 500. His prior industry experience included a management development program with a multi-billion dollar leasing company.

A native of North Carolina, Adam received his Bachelors Degree in history from Davidson College where he lettered in football. He earned an MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University where he focused primarily in economics and marketing. Adam is an active member in both the Davidson and Duke Alumni Associations.

### **Susie Jernigan**

Susie joined Sockwell Partners in 1986 and became a Managing Director in 1993. She has a diverse client base. Her experience includes senior searches in the nonprofit, real estate, financial services, manufacturing and technology sectors. Her clients, both domestic and international, range from emerging companies to Fortune 500. Prior to joining Sockwell Partners, she worked with two academic medical centers.

Susie holds a B.A. from Duke University. A frequent presenter at conferences and seminars, she has also written articles for national trade publications. Susie serves on the board of the Charlotte Regional Partnership and previously served on the board of a Child's Place. She was an appointed member of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission for six years. She is a native of Indianapolis.

### **Lyttleton Rich**

Lyttleton has nearly 30 years of executive search consulting experience. As a Managing Director in the firm, she has focused on the nonprofit, financial services, manufacturing, technology and real estate industries, where she has completed more than 225 assignments for senior and executive management talent. Her clients have included a leading bank holding company serving national and international markets, a large regional broker dealer, a national residential and commercial land development company, a large multi-hospital system and many other middle market companies.

Lyttleton began her career as a high school math teacher teaching college preparatory courses in the Atlanta and Charlotte public school systems. She is a Charlotte native and graduated with a B.A. in mathematics from Queens University of Charlotte, where she now serves on the Board of Trustees. She also has been on numerous community boards, including the YWCA, where she served as Board Chair, and Women Executives of Charlotte, where she served as president.

### **Steve Sellers**

Steve joined Sockwell Partners in 2011, bringing executive search consulting experience and 25 years in industry including management roles at a private equity-backed healthcare provider and three private equity-backed technology/manufacturing companies. He provides full service search consulting to a variety of industries including manufacturing, real estate, healthcare, technology, financial services, private equity and the nonprofit sector. During his career, Steve has been successful in recruiting professionals in senior management, finance, operations, engineering, human resources, consulting, sales and marketing.

A graduate of Davidson College, Steve also holds an MBA from Harvard Business School. He serves on the board of the Ben Craig Center and is a partner in Social Venture Partners Charlotte.

### **Bob Sherrill**

Since joining Sockwell in 1995, Bob's primary focus areas are nonprofit, financial services, and real estate. Functionally, he has handled assignments for all C-level positions. He participates in the National Association of Corporate Directors, the Urban Land Institute, and the Association for Corporate Growth. In addition, he is a member of the Association of Executive Search Consultants' Americas Council.

Locally, Bob serves on the Board of Managers for the Johnston YMCA and is a board member and past Chairman of the Community Weekday School. He is also a volunteer basketball coach. Earlier in his career, Bob was an Audit Manager with Price Waterhouse. A native of Greensboro, his academic credits include a B.A. in economics from Davidson and an M.S. in accounting from the University of Virginia.

## *References*

You can certainly speak with any of our references. Provided below is a brief list of North Carolina-based clients; however, we are happy to provide a much more complete list upon request.

**Bledsoe Cathcart Group**  
Charlotte, NC  
704.339.2006

Ms. Suzanne Bledsoe  
Principal  
*(formerly Division President of  
U.S. Trust)*

**Habitat Greater Greensboro**  
Greensboro, NC.  
336.681.6694 (cell)

Mr. Kevin Bullard  
Search Committee Chair

**Investors Management Corporation**  
Raleigh, NC  
919.215.3005 (cell)

Mr. James Hyler  
Partner  
*(formerly Vice Chairman of  
First Citizens Bank)*

**Novant Health**  
Winston-Salem, NC  
704.384.5184

Mr. Fred Hargett  
EVP/Chief Financial Officer

**Queens University of Charlotte**  
Charlotte, NC  
704.337.2299

Dr. Pamela Davies  
President

**United Way of the Central Carolinas**  
Charlotte, NC  
704.371.6210

Ms. Jane McIntyre  
Executive Director

**UMAR**  
Charlotte, NC  
704.334.2246

Mr. Ed Imbrogno  
Board Chair

**YWCA of the Central Carolinas**  
Charlotte, NC  
704.525.5770, ext. 217

Ms. Kirsten Sikkelee  
Executive Director/CEO

## ***Relevant Nonprofit Experience***

Sockwell has served the nonprofit market since the firm's inception. Our clients include chambers of commerce and economic development organizations, community development groups, cultural/arts organizations, education (K-12, higher education and related organizations), foundations, human service organizations, and professional and trade associations. These clients include private, public-private partnership, and public organizations. Below is just a sampling of searches in which we recruited executive leadership.

### **Select Not-For-Profit Credits**

#### **Alfred I. DuPont Testamentary Trust**

Jacksonville, FL

*A \$4.5B trust and its charitable beneficiary, The Nemours Foundation*

Chief Investment Officer

#### **Ardmore Development Authority/Chamber of Commerce**

Ardmore, OK

*A public-private partnership*

Vice President, Economic Development

#### **Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce**

Asheville, NC

*A partnership of more than 2000 businesses, organizations, and coalitions*

President & CEO

#### **Cabarrus County Chamber of Commerce**

Kannapolis, NC

*A chamber formed by the merger of the Concord and Kannapolis chambers*

President and Chief Executive Officer

#### **Charlotte Family Housing**

Charlotte, NC

*A 501(c)(3) providing shelter-to-housing programs for homeless families*

Executive Director

#### **Charlotte Regional Partnership**

Charlotte, NC

*A public/private economic development partnership for a 16-county region*

President & CEO

#### **Communities in Schools**

Charlotte, NC

*The nation's leading dropout prevention organization*

Executive Director

**Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce**

Topeka, KS  
*The Chamber of Commerce in the capital city of Kansas*  
President/CEO

**Habitat for Humanity**

Charlotte, NC  
*One of the largest Habitat for Humanity International affiliates in the country*  
Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

**Habitat for Humanity of Greater Greensboro**

Greensboro, NC  
*A large Habitat affiliate with a 25-year history of strong growth*  
Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer

**Kenosha Area Business Alliance**

Kenosha, WI  
*The lead economic development and business association in Kenosha County*  
President

**Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development**

Frankfort, KY  
*State agency in Kentucky responsible for growing technology-based jobs*  
Commissioner for New Economy

**Mecklenburg County Medical Society**

Charlotte, NC  
*A nonprofit professional society of 1,400+ physician-members*  
Executive Director

**North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry (NCCBI)**

Raleigh, NC  
*A non-partisan 501(c)6 membership organization serving as the state Chamber of Commerce*  
President/CEO

**Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)**

Portland, OR  
*A national educational assessment organization based in Portland, OR*  
Chief Executive Officer

**Palmetto Economic Development Corporation (branded as the South Carolina Power Team)**

Columbia, SC  
*The economic development alliance of South Carolina's state-owned electric utility, Santee Cooper, and South Carolina's 20 electric cooperatives*  
President



**Queens University**

Charlotte, NC

*A private, Presbyterian university*

Dean, McColl School of Business (*promoted to President*)

**Research Triangle Park Foundation**

Research Triangle Park, NC

*The managing entity for the world-renowned, 6,000-acre Research Triangle Park*

President & CEO (two searches for same position – 11 years apart)

**Sisters of Mercy Foundation**

Charlotte, NC

*A foundation making grants on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy to support selected 501(c)(3) tax exempt healthcare, educational and social service organizations*

President

**South Carolina Power Team**

Columbia, SC

*A not-for-profit economic development organization that represents Santee*

*Cooper and the 20 electric co-ops in the state of South Carolina*

President

**UMAR**

Charlotte, NC

*A 501(c)3 non-profit organization that manages 23 group homes and 6 apartments for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities*

President

**United Way of Central Carolinas**

Charlotte, NC

*A human services non-profit serving Charlotte and surrounding areas*

Chief Executive Officer

**Wake Forest University Health Sciences**

Wake Forest, NC

*A preeminent, internationally recognized academic medical center*

Executive Director, Piedmont Triad Research Park

**Western North Carolina Conference, United Methodist Church**

Charlotte, NC

*A conference comprised of more than 1,100 churches arranged in 15 districts located in 44 counties across western North Carolina.*

Conference Treasurer/Chief Operating Officer

## *Timeline*

In searches of this type, it normally takes six to eight weeks to assemble a slate of qualified candidates to introduce to the Search Committee/Board. Occasionally, holiday and/or search committee schedules extend the process.

The following is a step-by-step explanation of the process we undertake in a search:

- **Site visit:** before accepting an assignment, we like to spend several days getting a deep understanding for our client's culture and specific needs. This would include meetings with those people who will work closely with the new executive, the Board (or the Search Committee) and community forums. The more we learn about the organization, the challenges, and the expectations for the successful candidate the better "salespeople" we can be – and the better equipped we will be to assess potential candidates. **Timing: As soon as can be scheduled.**
- **Specifications development and document preparation:** creating a job description and a candidate background and experience qualifications document are critical steps in the process. These documents are the framework within which we evaluate potential candidates. Sometimes these have been prepared before the search firm's involvement; however, we typically develop these documents with input from our meetings with the Board, staff and the community. **Timing: Within three days of the site visit.**
- **Development of search strategy:** with your input and guidance, our plan assures you we will be looking in all the right places, and that no stone will be left unturned. We put the search strategy in writing and send it to the search committee for final approval. **Timing: Within three days of the site visit.**
- **Schedule of work:** we utilize a process that has been refined over time. Within two weeks of receiving your okay of the final specifications, we will provide a schedule. Typically, you should expect to see candidates within six to eight weeks of giving us the go-ahead. **Timing: First detailed written update at the two-week mark, with weekly updates thereafter.**
- **Referencing:** we reference earlier and more often than most search firms. When properly executed, there are no better predictors of future performance than candidates' references. **Timing: Two to three references before candidate introduction and three to five additional references of the final candidate(s) soon after face-to-face interviews with the board.**

- **Candidate appraisals:** we take special pride in our ability to provide insightful comments about the candidate's suitability. Clients can be surprised when we discuss candidates' "minuses." To the contrary, there is no such thing as the perfect candidate, and we believe understanding a candidate's shortcomings can be a powerful management tool. **Timing: Resume presentations/appraisals are provided appropriately ahead of candidates' scheduled interviews.**
- **Negotiation:** occasionally searches close without a hitch. More often than not, there is a role for a "middleman." While Sockwell never loses sight of who our client is, the close relationship we develop with your candidates typically enables us to play a meaningful role in negotiating the final offer.
- **Post-search follow-up:** we stay in touch with the successful candidate for as long as it takes to ensure the match has been well made. In the unlikely event that the successful candidate leaves within the first year of employment, for any reason, we will replace him/her at no additional fee expense. Since our firm's inception, our guarantee has come into play *in less than one percent* of our 1,000+ engagements.



## ***Approach, Sourcing and Screening***

### **Client and Community Meetings**

At the very beginning of the search, it is important to gain input from the Board, the staff and the community. Sockwell will solicit and compile that input through email questionnaires, face-to-face discussions and community meetings. The input will be helpful in expanding the list of qualifications you will be seeking in candidates and determining the search strategy.

### **Postings**

We will partner with the County's human resources leadership and the search committee to determine if there are sites on which it is worthwhile to post the position. The benefits versus the costs and the time devoted to filtering a plethora of responses need to be weighed. There are many sites to consider including: IMCA, Indeed, Bluesteps, and Monster among others.

### **Networking/Sourcing**

Our skilled internal researchers will use our database and on-line resources to identify and target counties across the country that are both larger and smaller than Mecklenburg but have some similarities in government structure and demographics. We will network with our many contacts in those areas (Presidents of Chambers of Commerce, heads of state and county economic development agencies, community leaders, business leaders and government officials) and with County Managers or people in similar positions. In much larger counties, we will also contact his/her #2.

If the qualifications you are seeking allow candidates to also come from the nonprofit, military, and/or other business sectors, our research and networking will delve deeply into those areas, as well. Through this exhaustive process, we will identify an extensive list of qualified people to approach as potential candidates. We will contact them by telephoning, emailing and using LinkedIn to describe the position and tell Mecklenburg County's unique story. It is not unusual for us to contact several hundred people during this part of the process.

### **Screening**

We use a variety of screening tools beginning with a lengthy telephone interview. We also use Skype interviews, verify resume information, perform extensive reference checking and request written answers to questions that allow us to assess their written communication skills. When our client approves consultant travel, we like to interview the final candidate group face-to-face before bringing them to Charlotte. If the client desires, we also have testing tools and resources that we can utilize.

### **Interviews with the Search Committee**

We typically facilitate all parts of the interviews in Charlotte including:

- preparing the search committee with candidate write-ups, candidate issues, interview format, interview questions and evaluation grids;
- scheduling candidates' travel and meeting them at the airport and transporting them to the meeting;
- providing Charlotte tours when time allows;
- sitting in on the interviews, when requested;
- facilitating the discussion of candidates after the interviews;
- debriefing candidates.

### **Closure**

Sockwell completes the reference checking process and background checks of any candidates remaining in the process. We also advise and assist in all parts of putting together the offer, including delivering the verbal offer if the client wishes. We also advise and walk the successful candidate through the resignation process with his/her current employer. We stay in close touch with the successful candidate until the report date and throughout his/her first year of employment.

## ***Why Sockwell Partners?***

- For 30 years, we have been the premier Charlotte-based retained executive search firm. We understand Charlotte's uniqueness and its government structure, and we have always had a commitment as a firm to help make our community a better place.
- Our history is marked with success, and we have recent experience assisting public and private companies, nonprofits, and other types of organizations recruit executive and senior leadership. Because our clients are located across the country and sometimes internationally, we are accustomed to searching coast to coast for candidates and in some instances globally.
- Working with boards of directors and search committees comprises a significant portion of the 50<sup>+</sup> searches we do annually. We pride ourselves in presenting a strong, diversified slate of candidates to our clients.
- Our Charlotte clients receive numerous benefits:
  - we can attend search committee meetings, community forums, etc. without billing our clients travel expenses, which can be substantial;
  - we can meet candidates when they come to Charlotte for the final interviews and show them around our area;
  - we know our broader community's history, culture, attractions, neighborhoods, people, government, etc. No search firm can "sell" the benefits of living in Mecklenburg County as well as Sockwell Partners;
  - unlike non local search consultants, we will be here long after the new County Manager has reported; our reputation and the impact this position has on our community is of utmost importance to us.

## ***Our Fee Arrangement***

We are a retained search firm. We bill our professional fee over the life of an active search – normally in three equal monthly installments. Occasionally, a client requests a payment modified schedule.

We prefer to work on a fixed fee basis. We propose a professional fee of \$55,000 for this search. The first invoice of the three invoices of \$18,333 will be sent at the end of our first month's work. We will send the second invoice a month later and the final invoice when the candidate of choice accepts the County's offer.

Out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of our client, including job postings, travel and interview expenses, are reimbursable and will be billed to you. These will be approved by you in advance and are billed at cost. In addition, our invoice will include a \$100 charge per billing period (3 maximum) for long-distance telephone charges, postage, overnight mail, and other administrative expenses

Expenses, in addition to the professional fee, vary. Consultant travel to meet and assess candidates also varies with the location of candidates. Typically, \$2500 to \$3000 is sufficient for consultant travel expenses. In some instances, our clients ask us to save on travel expenses by doing the interviews over Skype.

We are so confident our candidate will be successful that we promise to redo the search at no additional professional fee expense should he/she leave within the first twelve months of employment. Since the company's inception, we've redone searches in less than one percent of our engagements.