

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** *The City Council may consider applicant qualifications for the Council vacancy in executive sessions which are closed to the public, and then make the appointment in a public meeting. You have the right, however, to have your application considered in a public meeting by providing a written request to the City Clerk.*

**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF  
APPLICATION TO SERVE ON THE CITY COUNCIL**

RETURN TO: CITY CLERK VIA EMAIL AT STACY.SALTZBURG@FLAGSTAFFAZ.GOV

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS PUBLIC INFORMATION  
(APPLICATIONS WILL BE KEPT ON FILE FOR ONE YEAR)

DATE: 4/11/22

YOUR NAME: Chris Verrill

HOME ADDRESS: [REDACTED] ZIP: [REDACTED]

EMPLOYER: Theatrikos JOB TITLE: Executive Director

E-MAIL: [REDACTED]

CELL: [REDACTED] HOME PHONE: [REDACTED]

LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN FLAGSTAFF: 3 years PREFERRED PHONE:  HOME  CELL

Using additional pages, please answer the following questions in 250 words or less, per question:

1. What method do you expect to use to make a decision when you are faced with a strong constituency group advocating one way but you believe that there is a segment of the Flagstaff population not being heard on a particular issue?
2. Please give an example of when you were in a position of responsibility and others disagreed with you on how an important matter should be handled. How did you help resolve the issue?
3. What is your leadership style, please provide an example of your style in use.
4. If you could change one thing in the City of Flagstaff Zoning Code what would that be and why?
5. The City of Flagstaff has identified Key Community Priorities. How do you intend to balance the seven priorities in terms of the budget process and policy development?
6. What are your top three priorities for being a City Councilmember?
7. Flagstaff is known for its rich and highly diverse cultures in Northern Arizona. How would you build bridges and partnerships with our diverse communities to strengthen inclusion, diversity, equity, and access for the City of Flagstaff?

I certify that I meet the statutory requirements of living within the corporate limits of the City of Flagstaff for at least one year, that I am over the age of 18 years, that I am a registered voter of the City of Flagstaff, *and that I have read and understand the right to have my application considered in a public meeting by providing a written request to the City Clerk.*

[Signature]  
Applicant Signature

The City of Flagstaff is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

# Chris Verrill

## Flagstaff City Council

### Application

4/13/22

## Seven Questions

1 What method do you expect to use to make a decision when you are faced with a strong constituency group advocating one way but you believe that there is a segment of the Flagstaff population not being heard on a particular issue?

This is actually a very important point. The city council's job is to speak for all of Flagstaff; not just the squeakiest wheels. What's the big picture? What does Flagstaff want to be a decade or two from now? A generation or two from now? It is city council's responsibility to look out for the city's long-term future. A long-term future for everyone.

People who are passionate about issues show up to city council and write letters to the editor. As well they should. That's how democracy works. Good on 'em.

But those voices aren't the only voices. It is our responsibility to search out all opinions and perspectives on the issue. I always keep the big picture in mind. If I know the opposing point of view, I be sure it is considering in my thinking. If I don't know the opposing point of view, I search it out. Encourage them to speak out. If not, then I try to speak out on their behalf.

Yes, this makes the wheels of governance turn slower. But usually, they turn better. Issues are frequently complicated. It takes thoughtful consideration, not just to evaluate all sides, but to focus on term planning for the future.

2. Please give an example of when you were in a position of responsibility and others disagreed with you on how an important matter should be handled. How did you help resolve the issue?

I was the executive director of the English theatre in China. Theatre is part of the media in China. Thus, making it part of an extremely sensitive industry. After religion, it was the most severely censored industry in the largest country in the world.

Despite this, how did the theatre succeed? A lot of people disagreed on this point. Government officials, Chinese communist party officials, cast and crew, disagreed on a very contentious issue.

My answer was honesty and transparency.

My path forward with the theatre was to always be honest and transparent about the goals, mission and strategies of the theatre. As an example, I made it very clear to Chinese communist party officials that the theatre's goal was excellent, entertaining theatre. Our goal was not to be political agitators in a censorship-riddled political system. I was also equally honest and transparent that I would not compromise my principles and be bought into their propaganda agenda. Yes, they could count on Beijing Playhouse to be "harmonious." But we were not going to advance their disingenuous propaganda either.

I gave my word. I kept it. Even to people I disagreed with. On one hand, we never got involved in politics; which they liked. On the other hand, when they offered us money to do propaganda shows, we turned them down; which they didn't like. We were a known quantity.

That honesty and transparency meant that even people who disagreed with me trusted me. That's how we resolved the issue.

3. What is your leadership style, please provide an example of your style in use.

I've managed businesses and nonprofit organizations for my entire career. My management style is two-fold.

First, I like to achieve consensus. Sure, I'm a smart guy. But we are all smarter when we work together. A collaborative process that brings in multiple perspectives and diverse areas of expertise, when all pulled together, makes for better decisions. Perhaps slower. But almost always better. We are smart and better when we work together. Even as a manager, I listen to and empower my employees. Collectively we are smarter together than we are individually. Bringing people together like this is the best way to work with folks you disagree with and get everyone, or almost everyone, on board.

Secondly, all that said, consensus isn't always possible. On those occasions when we don't agree and can't find that common ground, I make the decision. Sometimes that

decision is deferring to someone else with more expertise. Sometimes it is me making the call because that's why my board of directors hired me. While I'd prefer the consensus and will work hard to achieve it, it isn't possible 100% of the time. In which case a decision is still needed because we need to move forward.

4. If you could change one thing in the City of Flagstaff Zoning Code what would that be and why?

Obviously, housing.

Housing is a big problem. I'm not telling you anything you don't already know. Perhaps the biggest problem in Flagstaff. How can teachers and police officers afford to live here? Employers are having difficulty hiring from out of town because of housing costs. That in turn hurts the economy. It's a precarious cycle that's gotten worse in the pandemic.

That said, we can't really build out. Building up, especially when done in the wrong place, can look ugly.

Acknowledging the same problem that we all know we have? That's easy. Changing zoning codes or other solutions to the problem? Not so easy.

If I had an answer at my fingertips, that would be a miracle. But I don't. What I have is an awareness of the issue and an eagerness to listen and work hard to find a solution.

5. The City of Flagstaff has identified Key Community Priorities. How do you intend to balance the seven priorities in terms of the budget process and policy development?

Before we balance the Key Community Priorities, we probably need to look at updating them.

Flagstaff's Key Community Priorities for PBB were most recently updated in November 2020. In normal times, that's fine. That's not too long ago. But in the throes of the pandemic, that's a lifetime ago. In just those short 18 months, the world has changed a lot. We've gotten a much better understanding of the pandemic's impact on the country and the people of Flagstaff. As an example, with increased remote work resulting from the pandemic, how we achieve our desire for a Robust Resilient Economy may change.

Prioritizing the seven objectives is indeed a balancing act. All of the objectives are intertwined. Intentionally adjusting one objective probably unintentionally adjusts a

different one. You want priorities that intermingle and support each other. Priorities that are selected based on their efficiency and cost effectiveness within a limited budget.

6. What are your top three priorities for being a City Councilmember?

The first priority is thoughtful deliberation. I think the council by and large succeeds at this. I want to make sure that continues. Taking all sides of an issue into consideration. Planning not just years ahead, but a decades and generations.

My second priority ensuring a smooth transition in the city council and the governance of the city. If selected, I'll only be on the council for seven months. And I am not seeking election (at least not this year). I'm not coming in with a pet project. I'm passionate about good governance. With this being a short-term position, the goal is an effective transition to council members serving full terms.

If you'd asked me a week ago, my third priority might have been something different. But now, my priority is making sure our upcoming election has lots of civic involvement. In an election that is to be decided by write-in candidates, we need to teach the public how this works. Teach the voters and candidates what to do. Have an engaged citizenry participating in a democratic process—a process that just got more difficult than checking a box.

7. Flagstaff is known for its rich and highly diverse cultures in Northern Arizona. How would you build bridges and partnerships with our diverse communities to strengthen inclusion, diversity, equity, and access for the City of Flagstaff?

This is extremely important to me. I mentioned this at one of the planning meetings a few months ago. Northern Arizona is very rich with diverse cultures. Yet, I don't think we're living up to our potential. I know there are efforts in the works. But we have a way to go on this issue.

I grew up in Hawaii. Native Hawaiian culture permeates the very fiber what it is to live in Hawaii. Although my stepfather is native Hawaiian, I am not. But the richness, the culture, the history is in every aspect of Hawaii. And in many ways, is in me. Everything from language, to customs to street names saturates the whole state.

But not in Flagstaff. It all too often feels like the city is here and Native Americans at the rez are there. And while the two certainly meet, they are not infused. I think that's a loss for everyone. We have rich cultures here that we are not embracing enough. I don't mean to say this is easy. My thanks to all those who are trying.

The mixture of cultures needs to be two things: 1) authentic, and 2) accessible.

We must remain true and honest and respectful of diverse cultures. At the same time, it must be within a layperson's grasp. We're not going to require a treatise on cultures. But rather an omnipresent exposure that cherishes different cultures and makes them an integral part of our heart and our identity as a community.

# Chris Verrill



April 13, 2022

Stacy Saltzburg  
City Clerk  
stacy.saltzburg@flagstaffaz.gov  
City of Flagstaff  
211 W Aspen  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Dear Ms Saltzburg,

It is a privilege to submit my application for the Flagstaff City Council vacancy for May 3 to December 20, 2022.

Most people know me as the executive director of Theatrikos Theatre Company. However, my interests and skills lie well beyond the arts. At the theatre, I focus first and foremost on excellent art, of course. And secondly, we take pride in using performing arts to help drive the economy of downtown Flagstaff.

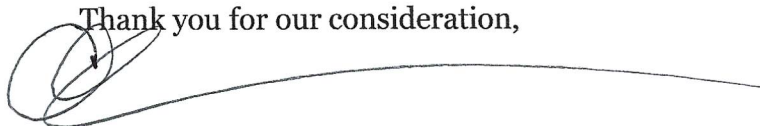
Beyond the arts, I've spent a career working for nonprofit organizations. And I've served on the board of directors of many more. How these nonprofits make our community a better place to live has always been a key part of what motivates me.

Since arriving in Flagstaff, I've:

- Served on the City of Flagstaff Tourism Commission
- Graduated from the Flagstaff Leadership Program
- Member of Rotary Club of Flagstaff
- Chairperson, Flagstaff Dark Sky Arts and Ideas Festival (wt)

As a Flagstaff resident, I've committed to doing my part to work to make my Flagstaff home a better place to live.

Thank you for our consideration,



Chris Verrill

## Executive Director Theatrikos Theatre Company

Flagstaff, Arizona

February 2019—Present

- Responsible for all aspects of the theatre; including all financial, artistic, programming, fundraising, education and marketing efforts. Primary spokesperson for the theatre in the community.
- Reporting directly to the board of directors. Supervise 200 volunteers and six paid staff.
- Produce six shows each season. Guide artistic committee in oversight of shows.
- Modified theatre's emphasis of show selection to more accurately reflect the audience's preferences and increase ticket sales.
- Spearhead legal, financial, insurance, reconstruction and public relations efforts to recover from sewage flooding industrial accident which destroyed part of the theatre in April 2019.
- Leveraged industrial accident into launch of new membership fundraising program.
- Create annual calendar. Extended the runs of some shows.
- Launched theatre's first channel sales partnerships.
- Launched effort to sell private performances.
- Secured offsite rehearsal space so some of our shows could run longer to improve our service to the community as well as drive revenue.
- Launched 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Drama Club as a means to recruit new cast and crew.
- Solidified launch of preview night performances to increase donor retention as well as ticket sales.
- Began the process of creating Flagstaff's first annual arts festival. Wrangled together the leaders of the dozen major arts organizations to launch the new festival in May 2023.
- Conceived of and secured first round funding for *Route 66 to the Grand Canyon (wt)*, a show targeted to tourists designed, not only drive revenue for the theatre, but to enhance tourism revenue in the local economy.
- Launched lighting and sound design trainings to increase talent pool.
- Launched TheatriKids Fundamentals; a new beginning level theatre education program for children.
- Out of 50 arts organizations in the city, received highest grant award from the Flagstaff Arts Council.
- Graduated from the Flagstaff Leadership Program.
- Expanded concession offerings. Improved art gallery displays and silent auctions.
- Designed theatre's marketing materials.

## Executive Director

# Beijing Playhouse

Beijing, China

2006–2018

- Direct 100 staff, cast, crew, and volunteers at China's English Broadway Theatre. Beijing Playhouse was the largest locally produced English theatre in China.
- Oversee all departments; including operations, artistic, business development, marketing, programmatic, financial and education.
- Manage and train all senior management and production crew; including directors, lighting designers, sound designers, engineers, production managers, stage managers, musical directors, choreographers, costume designers, box office staff, sales staff, marketing staff, head ushers, accountants, website developers, food and beverage, props masters, make-up artists, set designers and builders, subtitles producers and others.
- Introduce “off-Broadway” semi-professional theatre business model to China.
- Produce major Broadway shows such as *Guys and Dolls*, *The Odd Couple*, *Love Letters*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Christmas Carol* and more. Create annual season calendar.
- Supervise marketing and public relations program. Write and distribute press releases. Generate editorial coverage. Develop marketing strategy. Design and print all advertisements, flyers, playbills and tickets.
- Create and manage ticket sales program. Create box office systems and sales strategies. Develop channel sales opportunities.
- Solicit and secure corporate sponsorships. Increased sponsorship from zero to 16.
- Sell private performances for corporate parties, customer gifts and community fundraisers. Increased from zero per show to an average of four per show.
- Managed all financial and investor issues related to the launch of a new venture. Created China's first legal English theatre WFOE (Wholly Foreign Owned Enterprise). In only three years, Beijing Playhouse reached breakeven. (A respectable ROI for any industry—but amazing in performing arts.)
- Direct shows as necessary.
- Audition cast as necessary.
- Launch and supervise drama club.
- Conceive, create and launch Beijing Playhouse Academy of Performing Arts kids theatre camps and education programs. Hired teachers and recruited and trained students.
- Create corporate training program. Teach business professional public speaking skills.
- Create Beijing Playhouse talent agency.

## Executive Director

# Charity Readers Theatre

Beijing, China

2013–2019

- Launch first readers theatre program in China.
- Produce quick “Show in a Week” productions designed to create excellent theatre and set an example for professional and transparent philanthropy.
- Recruit and direct all cast and crew in all facets of small scale theatre production.

## Producer

### China Radio International

Beijing, China

2005—2006

- Produce, edit, and design national radio program *China Drive* on CRI Easy FM. Broadcast to a 100 million person audience in Beijing, Shanghai, and 20 other cities throughout China, Asia and Africa.
- Direct staff of sixteen features correspondents, audio technicians, and editors for China's nationally broadcast drive time features radio discussion show, Monday-Friday, 5pm-7pm.
- Serve as *China Drive* managing editor. Assign stories. Edit, proof, and prioritize stories. Assign and manage beat assignments. Create daily rundown.
- Founding producer. Conceive, design and create new daily show. Develop a concept of a credible features show that works within the confines of Chinese media constraints.
- Produce and edit 16 stories daily, five days a week. Train new features correspondents. Teach broadcasting classes.
- Co-host daily broadcast.
- Assist with show promotion. Guest appearances at various events around Beijing. Write and produce radio promos. Design promotional artwork.
- Develop database of listeners for promotional segments and activities.

## Director / Board Member

### Riverfront Playhouse

Redding, California

1992—2000

- Direct shows. Serve as cast and crew of various shows.
- Increase donors. Improve membership program. Launch telemarketing.
- Ensure financial solvency through increased ticket sales and launch of season tickets.
- Develop media sponsorships with local TV and radio stations.
- Create partnerships with local non-profits to drive publicity and improve theatre involvement in the community by supporting worthwhile causes.
- Monitor financial reports and fiscal solvency.

## Director

### Redding Improv Players

Redding, California

1999—2000

- Launch city's first improv performance group (which is still running 18 years later).
- Lead improv workshops. Produce the first two shows.

# Development Director

## KIXE-TV, PBS, Channel 9

Chico/Redding, California

1992-2000

- Directly responsible for all marketing, direct mail, telemarketing, corporate affiliate partnerships, TV and radio advertising, magazine advertising, sales, grants and auctions.
- Act as principle on-air spokesperson.
- Manage ten person marketing and fundraising staff.
- Produce televised pledge drives, auctions, lectures and special events.
- Organize marketing efforts through direct marketing, short form spot marketing, long form video pledge drives, televised auctions, public relations and community outreach.
- Foster and maintain community relations with key constituents, stakeholders, donors and other community non-profit organizations.
- Supervise in-house telemarketing and support desk staff. Contract with outside telemarketing companies to acquire new customers. Develop business partnerships with corporations.
- Create, design and produce print, radio and television promotional spots and materials.
- Established preschool education outreach project. Taught parents and pre-school providers media literacy and the value of reading to children.
- Executive producer *Sex & Sensibility* series to reduce teen pregnancy. Secured funding and develop business relationships with outside distribution partners.

## Director / Cast / Crew

### Various Theatres

California, Maryland, Australia, China

1985—Present

- Selected Shows Directed: Guys and Dolls, Romeo and Juliet, A Christmas Carol, Curious Savage, Arsenic and Old Lace, Time Slip, That Was The Dog That Died, Going In, Love Sex and the IRS, Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged), Robin Hood, Rapunzel, Our Town, 12 Angry Men, Yes Virginia there is a Santa Claus
- Selected Stage Performances: Chekhov In Yalta (Pacifica Spindrift Players), Beyond Therapy (This Side of the Hill Players), A Christmas Carol (Fell's Point Corner Theatre), Mousetrap (Pacifica Spindrift Players), Charley's Aunt (Shasta College Theatre), Grapes of Wrath (Spotlighters), Overcoat (Shasta College Theatre), One Flew Over the Cuckoo's (Riverfront Playhouse), Romeo and Juliet (Redding Community Theatre), Golden Boy (New Century Theatre), Arsenic and Old Lace (Altarena Playhouse), Dial M for Murder (Altarena Playhouse)
- Movies: Kite Runner (Dreamworks), Skiptrace (Jackie Chan)

## Assistant General Manager

### WBJC-FM

Baltimore

1989-1992

- Overall financial responsibility for this public radio station. Responsible for all budgets.
- Manage CPB grants.
- Develop marketing and communications print, radio and television promotional campaigns.

## Business Manager

### *The Daily Californian*

Berkeley, California

1988-1989

- Act as non-profit newspaper's chief fiscal officer.
- Prepare annual budget. Generate monthly financial statements.
- Authorize all contractual agreements. Oversee all expenses and revenue.

## Producer / Director

### KDVS Radio Theatre

Davis, California

1986–1988

- Launch radio theatre department KDVS Wireless Playhouse.
- Produce and direct weekly radio theatre program and weekly *Comedy, Comedy, Comedy*.

## Business Manager

### *The California Aggie*

Davis, California

1986-1988

- Supervise staff of 75.
- Manage marketing, advertising, graphic art, production, business and circulation departments.

## Education

### University of California at Davis

Davis, California

BS Managerial Economics

### Maui High School

Kahului, Hawaii