



FIRE CHIEF

Bulloch County Board of Commissioners
in Statesboro, Georgia invites your
interest this position.



Bulloch County Board of Commissioners: Fire Chief Recruitment

The Bulloch County Board of Commissioners in Statesboro, Georgia is actively recruiting a Fire Chief. This recruitment profile describes the community, the organization, the position with its challenges and opportunities, and a profile of the ideal candidate.

THE COMMUNITY

Bulloch County and the county seat of Statesboro has positioned itself to provide an exceptional



quality of life that includes abundant cultural amenities and ample economic and educational opportunities to its citizenry, a

southern charm to its visitors, and a progressive yet conservative county government. It is also one of the largest counties geographically in the state having 682 square miles, supporting, still yet a rich legacy of agriculture, forestry and precious natural resources. The county is located on the fringe of the expanding Savannah metro area, and is now home to approximately 83,000 residents, more than doubling its population since 1980. Bulloch County is the Coastal Georgia's third most populous behind Chatham and Glynn. It is estimated that 48,000 persons reside within three miles of the very center of the City of Statesboro, while Statesboro's population is now estimated to be over 34,000.

Statesboro is a small town, and feels like it, but presents opportunities for culture and recreation that you would expect in a much larger community. Georgia Southern University is a major economic engine and contributes to these opportunities. So far as culture is concerned, first-rate arts and entertainment events are quite frequent on and off campus. GSU faculty and staff, as well as family members are often involved in music and theater productions. The Emma Kelly Theater in the Averitt Center for the Arts, GSU Performing Arts Center and Foy Concert Hall are centers of activity. Visual arts are very well represented on campus and at The Averitt Center. There are a few studios and galleries

in the area. GSU has its own excellent sports facilities for faculty, staff and students. The GSU Botanical Garden is a small, but well-developed facility for gardening and plant enthusiasts. Landscaping is punctuated with sculptures. The garden walk and sites are well marked with informative plaques. Lectures, workshops, weddings, receptions and concerts are often hosted. Local music legends Emma Kelly (dubbed by Johnny Mercer as the Lady of 6,000 Songs) and Blind Willie McTell (blues artist, master of the 12-string guitar, and writer of "Statesboro Blues" later made famous by the Allman Brothers) were native to Statesboro. Restaurants and entertainment venues are emerging in Downtown Statesboro, and elsewhere on and off campus. There is an active Farmer's Market that is open for most of the year. Savannah, Georgia and the beaches are an hour away.



Tax rates and the cost of living are comparatively low. Sperling's cost of living index is 85.0% of the nationwide average cost. Residential housing choices and commercial shopping opportunities are ample.

THE ORGANIZATION

The Board of Commissioners, as the policymaking governing body of the county, consists of a part-time Chairperson (elected at large) and six part-time district commissioners elected from two districts for four-year, staggered terms. A peer selected Vice-Chairman position is rotated each year for a one-year term in succession. They hold regular meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month, holding special called meetings, as required. They are responsible for both executive and legislative functions including establishing ordinances, passing resolutions, setting the annual budget and tax rates, property control and other internal and external policy.

In addition to the Board of Commissioners, The Georgia Constitution provides for each county to have four elected officers with certain special



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powers: Sheriff, Tax Commissioner, Clerk of the Superior Court and Judge of the Probate Court. The Board of Commissioners may set annual appropriations for each official, but does not have operating authority over their affairs, except for those offices where employees are governed under county personnel rules and to provide annual appropriations. There are also various other elected or appointed officials in the judiciary treated similarly by the Board.

The form of government is a Commission-Manager model (which corresponds to a municipal council-manager form), and Bulloch County citizens can boast of their professionally run county government. This allows the Commission to transfer the day-to-day executive functions and implementation of Board policies to trained and qualified experts, led by the County Manager who is the chief administrative officer. The county has enhanced its administrative capacity and workforce consistent with the growth of the community by hiring highly educated and experienced professionals to fill key positions. The county executive staff has no less than six people with advanced degrees in public or business administration and law, and virtually all department heads have bachelor's degrees that include disciplines such as accounting, civil engineering, urban planning, building construction, recreation and criminal justice. Many are professionally certified, licensed or credentialed.

Financially, Bulloch County's annual general appropriations budget is now over \$118 million, and the county manages assets of over \$85 million. The county has among the lowest base ad valorem tax rates for county services in Georgia at 11.35 mills. Including constitutional and statutory officers, there are 488 full time-employees budgeted. However, the reliance on part-time employees in recreation increases the full-time equivalent to 600. Add the unpaid labor factor of inmates from the County Correctional Institute, and the number goes to over 750. Like with most local governments, financial challenges exist, but the Board of Commissioners is committed to providing excellence in service delivery.

Structurally, the Board of Commissioners and the County Manager directly oversee five operational divisions that include administration, recreation and

parcs, public works, public safety and development. There are also traditional state-based services delivered at the county level including elections, tax assessment and collections, the Sheriff and Jail, the circuit-wide criminal justice system including, Effingham, Jenkins and Screven Counties, cooperative extension services, and other health and human services. The County also funds services at the regional level including a library, dial-a-ride transit services, aging services and more.



THE POSITION

The selected candidate will have the following essential duties and responsibilities:

Supervises regular and temporary staff and volunteer firefighters: plans, coordinates, assigns and reviews work of individuals and the team; evaluates training needs and provides instruction; schedules staff vacations and approves sick leave; recommends discipline, disciplinary actions, discharge and salary increases; prepares timesheets; interviews candidates; conducts employee performance evaluations; and establishes and promotes employee morale.

Plans, organizes, directs and evaluates department programs, service delivery, and staff; oversees and directs the day-to-day operations; establishes appropriate firefighting techniques and strategies; and recruits and trains volunteer firefighters.

Develops, implements, and maintains department goals, objectives, policies and priorities for appropriate service areas: makes recommendations on changes to the firefighting by-laws; reviews Insurance Service Office ratings for County citizens; and ensures volunteer firefighters keep a high level of morale.

Responds to and assumes command at emergency or disaster scenes: ensures utilization of effective command and control techniques; makes determinations concerning the appropriate response and firefighting methods; allocates manpower and resources; and investigates the cause of all fires.



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Ensures compliance with all applicable codes, laws, rules, regulations, standards, policies and procedures; ensures adherence to established safety procedures; monitors environment and use of safety equipment to ensure safety of employees and other individuals; and initiates any actions necessary to correct deviations or violations.

Oversees the testing and maintenance of equipment and facilities; inspects apparatus and firefighting equipment; and makes recommendations on replacement and repairs.

Makes inspections of places of business to ensure compliance with fire and life safety rules and regulations; identifies needed corrections and deviations; and maintains related documentation.

Develops, defends and implements department budget: determines budget needs and allocations for staffing, equipment and capital needs; processes and approves purchase orders; seeks, applies for and administers granted funds; and monitors expenditures and revenues to ensure compliance with approved budget.

Develops, reviews, and implement all firefighting policies and procedures in accordance with local, state and federal laws; ensures that policies and procedures are being met by all firefighters; ensures that Bulloch County is up to date with state and national rules/laws; and ensures that all fire and training reports are completed and submitted to the state on a regular basis. Performs other related duties as required.

The candidate should have the following minimum qualifications:

Bachelor Degree in Fire Science, Emergency Management, Public Administration, or related field required; supplemented by ten years of progressively responsible experience in fire operations, to include five years of lead or supervisory experience; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job.

Specific License or Certification Required:

- Must possess and maintain a valid Georgia driver's license.

- Must possess and maintain a Georgia Fire Officer IV certification, or equivalent (or, the ability to acquire such in two years).
- Must possess and maintain ICS/NIMS 100,200, 300, 400, 700 and 800 certifications.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, ISSUES FOR THE POSITION

Urban Fire District:

The Fire District originated in 1978 as an agreement between Bulloch County and the City of Statesboro, providing for the city to act as first responder for fire calls in a five-mile radius of Statesboro. This arrangement provides fire service response and lower fire hazard insurance rates for homeowners and businesses in this area.

However, these benefits are the result of additional resources funded through an additional millage rate on district property owners. The special district tax represents 35% of the cost of the City of Statesboro Fire Department. A budget is submitted by the city annually to aid in determining the amount of the millage to be applied. The cost impact of the millage by property owners is offset by a reduction in fire hazard premiums due to a lower insurance rating for the level of service provided by the city.

Rural Fire District:

The mission of the Rural Fire District is to provide responsive fire protection in seventeen (17) rural fire stations and sub-stations while assisting in various mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions. This department will face increasing challenges as Bulloch County's population continues to grow. Meanwhile, the Board of Commissioners has made a long-term commitment to improve the service levels for rural fire protection. In FY 2010, the county was successful in lowering the insurance rating for many rural homeowners through an evaluation by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) to determine community fire-fighting capabilities for equipment, facilities, and training. Bulloch County has implemented most of these measures and will continue to invest in rural sub-stations. In FY 2020, the County Commission switched from a fee to a tax to more equitably charge for this service. The millage rate will remain the same as the previous year for the 2022 tax levy (which will be the revenue source for FY 2023 operations), at 1.97 mills. For FY 2023, six additional



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full-time employees have been added to help improve fire protection, reduce response time, and lower/maintain favorable ISO ratings. The goal is to hire twelve additional fire fighters over the next two years to be housed in three primary stations. Emergency Medical Services is a separate function, but, the future goal is to co-locate in the primary stations

Scope of Services:

The scope of the department in terms of human and capital resources is significant.

- \$1,680,000 annual operating budget
- \$1,463,000 annual capital budget
- 18 full-time and 6 part-time firefighters
- 56 volunteer firefighters
- 31 fleet apparatus
- ISO 05/5X
- Approximately 300 fire calls annually (71% structure)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB GROWTH AND ENRICHMENT

The visibility of the position allows the opportunity for the new Fire Chief to be a change agent for the fire department. Management and elected officials are supportive of providing the resources necessary for success. Employee training and professional development resources re-committed. Effective management and legal support are available at the staff level. There is no micro-management atmosphere, but accountability and transparency are valued in the organization. The new Fire Chief will have the opportunity to define, or re-define, the job.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The primary responsibilities for all county employees are to provide excellent service, pursue continuous improvement and exceed expectations.

The selected candidate must be a persuasive influencer to many internal and external constituencies. The ideal candidate will have a strong related background and preferably extensive knowledge and experience in municipal or county government, in addition to traits and characteristics such as:

Professional Skills and Management Style:

- Strategic and analytical, yet creative - an idea person.
- Self-starter, hardworking, and a producer.
- Fair in approach to decision making yet firm in application of policies, rules and laws.
- Ability to develop and maintain good public relations internally and externally.
- Willing to be a visible leader and a team player.
- Possess a command presence.

Personal Traits:

- Enthusiastic in presenting ideas, while being respectful of others.
- Ethical with high moral standards.
- Honest, trustworthy, open and candid.
- Loyal.
- Accessible and approachable, listens well.
- Proactive in responding to issues.
- Visionary, global thinker, willing to think outside the box.
- Compassionate.
- Self-confident, tactful, discreet, diplomatic.
- Consensus builder.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The hiring range for the position will be market competitive, based on qualifications and experience. The successful candidate will be offered a comprehensive benefits package to include:

- Professional Development Opportunities
- 401(a)/457(b) Retirement Plan*
**A switch to a defined benefit pension is being considered, but not yet approved*
- Health, Dental Vision Insurance
- Paid Time Off Benefit
- Paid Holidays
- Employee Assistance Program
- Group Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Annual Leave Cash Out Upon Eligibility
- Supplemental Employee Paid Insurance Products
- Peace Officers Annuity and Benefit (POAB)



APPLICATION PROCESS

The application is open until filled. Interested applicants should submit a confidential resume with cover letter to: Cindy Mallett, Human Resources Department, Bulloch County Board of Commissioners, 115 North Main Street, Statesboro, Georgia 30458. ***Electronic responses are preferred and should be directed to cmallett@bullochcounty.net.***

Please submit an application on the County's website at www.bullochcounty.net/jobs and send your resume with cover letter to Cindy Mallett at the email address listed above. A criminal background check is required. Bulloch County is Equal Opportunity Employer Committed to Workforce Diversity.

BULLOCH COUNTY MOTTO

First in Safety and Service

BULLOCH COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

The highest priority for Bulloch County Government is to strive to be a high-performance organization that is prepared, effective, efficient and accountable for providing safety and service to our citizens.