The International Public Management Association for Human Resources is seeking nominations for the:

2018 IPMA-HR AGENCY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

I. General Introductions:

The Association established this award to recognize the overall quality, accomplishments, and contributions of an agency human resource program that exceeds the normal operation of a “good government human resource program.” The awards are based on the lenses and focus areas contained in the HR 2020 Shifting Perspectives: A Vision for Public Sector HR report that was released in September 2016. Additional information on the report is available at: https://www.ipma-hr.org/stay-informed/research-and-reports/hr-2020-shifting-perspectives. Awards may be given in each of the following categories, based on the number of employees covered by your human resource program:

1) Small Agency – Under 1,999 employees
2) Medium Agency – 2,000 to 9,999 employees
3) Large Agency – 10,000 and over

The Awards will be based on program initiatives, accomplishments, and contributions within the three-years immediately preceding the nomination. Agencies nominated must be and have been an IPMA-HR Agency member with a minimum of 3 years consecutive membership.

All nominations will be considered as final entries and are limited to 7 pages (including the executive summary). The Awards Committee will not consider supporting documentation. Nominations must be made using this form:

Upload your completed application to the Award’s Depot at https://www.ipma-hr.org/membership/awards

Questions:
IPMA-HR
Attn: Debbie Tankersely-Snoek - dtankersely@ipma-hr.org - 1617 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
703/549-7100 (phone) - 703/684-0948 (fax) - ipma-hr.org

All nominations must be received by June 4, 2018. The Agency Awards will be presented during the 2018 IPMA-HR International Training Conference & Expo in Phoenix, AZ September 22-26, 2018.

The following agency is nominated for the 2018 IPMA-HR Agency Award for Excellence

Agency        City of Suffolk
Contact Name  Nancy Olivo
Title         Director of Human Resources
Address       442 W. Washington Street
City          Suffolk
State         Va
Zip            23439
Phone         757-514-4112
Fax            757-514-4129
Email         holivo@suffolkva.us

Number of employees covered by the human resource program 1400 full time
I. Executive Summary (no more than 1-2 pages – to be attached -- or up to 1,500 words):
The summary must include the number of agency employees, name of your agency’s initiative/accomplishments, provide highlights for up to 3 of your agency’s initiatives/accomplishments (limit to 5-6 sentences per initiative) and list any other initiatives/accomplishments for reference.

II. Organizational Biography (500 words or less – to be attached):
Please include when your organization was established, number of agency employees, constituents served and an overview of your population.

III. Program Characteristics:
Describe the environment in which the human resource program operates. Address specifically: size (i.e., number of employees served), types of employees (i.e., clerical, administrative, professional); union relations; budget and human resource constraints; and relationship to Chief Executive Officer. Is the program for an operating or central human resource agency? (Please attach description)

IV. Human Resources:
Please describe how the human resources program addresses the areas of leadership, culture, talent, technology, and communications as viewed through the lenses of business acumen, innovation, and strategic orientation. The nomination can be based on one specific program that addresses one of the focus areas or on multiple focus areas. Specifically identify those accomplishments you consider to be innovative. If the nomination is for a central human resource agency, describe how the accomplishments have benefited the agencies served. If the nomination is for an operating agency, describe how the accomplishments have benefited the management and employees of the agency. (Please attach description)

Please direct all questions regarding this award and/or nomination form to:
IPMA-HR Awards Committee
1617 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 549-7100
Fax: (703) 684-0948
Executive Summary

The Department of Human Resources began a journey to become a high performing organization in 2013. Using a High Performance Organization approach taught at the Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia, the HR department began to transform itself into a strategic business partner. There are three initiatives that will be highlighted:

1. Development of a citywide Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan
   Council adopted resolution in 2015, process ongoing

2. Creation of a Performance Management System
   which links employee objectives to citywide goals/objectives
   Policy finalized in 2015, program monitoring and enhancements ongoing

3. Design and implementation of a comprehensive training and
c change management strategy to support a culture of engagement
   2015 to current

An employee engagement survey administered in July of 2017 by CPS HR Consulting revealed positive results indicative of the success of these programs. The details will be provided in another section.

Highlights of Initiatives:
1. Development of a citywide Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan
   The HR department used business acumen in assessing the environment and recognized the need for an organizational roadmap. Therefore, the HR Director provided leadership to the City Manager and Executive Team in building a strategy focused organization in which organizational priorities (goals), objectives and actions are linked to employee performance (which is the second initiative to be discussed separately). Specific Leadership steps entailed making a business case to the City Manager for the need to develop a Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives, and Actions; developing a plan on how to get there, implementing the plan which included designing and facilitating multiple retreats, and works sessions with the Executive Team, and eliciting support from key stakeholders. The outcome was a document which included a Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Five Goals, and multiple Objectives and Actions for each Goal. A version of this document can be found on page 7. In order to ensure this process and resulting document actually served as a roadmap for organizational and individual performance, HR collaborated with staff from the Budget Office to incorporate the Goals and Objectives into the budget process. Department budget submissions now require the identification of a citywide goal which is supported by department objectives. This was a major accomplishment.

   In 2015, our Deputy City Manager became City Manager. The Director of Human Resources provided consultation and leadership to the newly appointed City Manager in exploring how to get City Council support for the Vision, Goals and Objectives. The HR Director recommended a colleague to serve as a facilitator for a Council Retreat, and in a two-day session, the City Council expanded on the Vision, and embraced the Goals and Objectives with some minor modifications in a 2015 Council Resolution. HR continues to lead the process whereby the actions are modified to keep the plan up to date. This dynamic document provides the overall roadmap for the organization, generates a “report card” to share Administration’s annual accomplishments to the City Council and is used by employees and supervisors to set performance objectives annually.

   HR staff conducted best practice research on effective performance management systems and found that the best systems had two components: measuring the “what” (objectives) and the “how” (competencies). Additional research, particularly in the Engagement Literature, also found that high
performance organizations ensured that employees were aware of the organization’s vision and mission and how their job supported the direction of the organization. Based on fundamental change management principles, a process of inclusion was used to develop a new process and forms consistent with best practices. First, a survey was sent to all employees which asked a series of questions to assess the quality and effectiveness of the existing performance management system in providing feedback, assessing performance accurately, and managing performance. The results were not favorable. Two teams were created to work with HR to develop a new process and forms: one team included rank and file employee relations committee members and the second team included Assistant Directors. In multiple sessions designed and facilitated by HR, the two teams developed and embraced three forms: one for employees, one for supervisors and one for managers. The forms are identical in that they include two sections, individual employee objectives which tie back to the city strategic plan, and behavioral competencies. The Employee form contains 4 Competencies: Accountability, Integrity, Customer Focus, and Professional and Technical Knowledge. The Supervisor/Manager form contains the additional competencies of Leadership, Management, Judgement/Decision Making and Adaptability/Flexibility. Each Competency has behavioral examples, developed in consultation with the two teams, which identifies the relevant expected behaviors of employees and supervisors in Suffolk. HR listened to feedback about how the prior 5 point scale led to bad morale and meaningless discussions between an employee and a supervisor on differences of a tenth of a point. Based on those discussions, as well as years of experience in managing performance management systems, it was proposed that the rating scale would have no numbers, and only 3 levels: Needs Improvement, Meets or Exceeds Expectations. For the objectives, target measures clarifying what “excellent” and “meets expectations” would look like, to reduce supervisor subjectivity and to proactively manage performance. The teams embraced these concepts and adopted the scale.

HR staff provided training on the city’s Strategic Plan, the importance of alignment of employee objectives to the plan, and how to use the performance management process each year to develop individual objectives, set behavioral expectations, provide employee feedback regularly, and evaluate performance. For multiple incumbent positions, like eligibility workers and firefighters, HR staff worked with departmental reps to create meaningful objectives to be used for all employees in those positions.

3. Designed and implemented a comprehensive training and change management strategy to support a culture of engagement.

The City of Suffolk in 2013 was a financially strong city, responsive to citizens. Opportunities existed for departments to work more collaboratively across departmental lines and for leadership and management to be less autocratic and more consultative. In order to be successful with this culture change, HR received the ongoing support of City Management in a multi-year change strategy.

- HR staff provided coaching, management interventions, retreats, training and small group facilitated sessions to assist leaders and supervisors to manage and lead consistent with a high performance organization; and to build the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to be consultative leaders and to treat employees with respect, while holding them accountable. Some specific examples include:
  
  - Rollout of a Leadership Development Program for Middle/Senior Managers, and First Line Supervisors. An important component of the training included Ken Blanchard’s Situational Leadership Training Program. All senior and middle managers were required to attend this weeklong training led by HR. First Line Supervisors received an abbreviated version of Situation Leadership along with modules on the Fundamentals of Supervision. Additional stand-alone training classes for supervisors and managers were also offered, such as Communication, Effective Listening, Managing Conflict, Managing Change, Ethics, etc. Based on feedback from the Engagement Survey, Blanchard’s Coaching Module was purchased in May of 2018 and all Managers and Supervisors are required to attend.
- Creation of the Leadership Network, composed of Assistant Directors within the city and facilitated by HR, the purpose of which was to create an informal learning environment to discuss the "how-tos" of leadership and management principles, tools and techniques; to share leadership success stories and challenges; and to provide support and encouragement to others in leadership positions in order to maximize success. Regular meetings were held to discuss topics generated by the group, including: How to Build a Positive Work Culture Where Employees are Engaged, Ideas for Streamlining Key City Processes, How to Manage Challenging Employees, Organizational and City Goals-how to get staff to see the big picture. Members continue to benefit from this Leadership Network, as collaborative relationships have been established across department lines that didn’t exist before.

- Use of Likert’s Organizational Systems 1-4 as a coaching tool to explore with managers how their style impacts employee motivation, attitudes, and performance and problem solve on how specific changes to communication, goal setting, and decision making can benefit the organization.

- Facilitation of Department Strategic Planning Sessions; Design and Facilitation of Retreats to Enhance Organizational Effectiveness, and Facilitation of Work Sessions for Collaborative Problem Solving, using tools like SWOT analysis, Fishbone Diagrams, Idea Mapping, etc.

An engagement survey administered in July to August of 2017 demonstrated that the programs described in this Executive Summary were successful: employees supported the city’s mission, knew how their job fit, believed their performance ratings were fair, and had confidence in their supervisors. I will share exact percentages in the Human Resources section.

For reference purposes, during a similar time period, the Human Resources Department developed an HR Strategic Plan, transitioned from using a paper based recruitment system to a computer based applicant tracking system (NeoGov), implemented an on-line Onboarding Process, transitioned from a paper based open enrollment process to on-line open enrollment, implemented an award winning Wellness Program, and implemented a Total Quality Management System which was recognized by Public Risk Managers in Virginia.

II. Organizational Biography:

Suffolk was founded by English colonists in 1742 as a port town on the Nansemond River in the Virginia Colony. Originally known as Constant’s Warehouse, for John Constant, Suffolk was renamed after Royal Governor William Gooch’s home of Suffolk, a county in East Anglia, England. Before European contact, indigenous American tribes lived in the region for thousands of years. At the time of English settlement, the Nansemond Indians lived along the river. In the early colonial years, the English cultivated tobacco as a commodity crop, but later turned to mixed farming. It became the county seat of Nansemond County in 1750.

Suffolk became an incorporated town in 1808. In 1910, it incorporated as a city and separated from Nansemond County. However, it remained the seat of Nansemond County until 1972, when its former county became the independent city of Nansemond. In 1974, the independent cities of Suffolk and Nansemond merged under Suffolk’s name and charter.

Presently, the city of Suffolk has about 1400 full time employees who serve 94,000 residents who reside over 430 square miles of a mix of urban and rural communities. Seven boroughs are represented each by a City Council member. The elected Mayor represents the entire city.
Below are key demographics:

Demographics

There's a bright future in store for Suffolk. When the City of Suffolk merged with the County of Nansemond on January 1, 1974, it grew overnight from a small county town of two square miles to the state's largest city of 430 square miles, half the size of Rhode Island. And the region's population is projected to more than double over the next 20 years. That progression is seen as income levels rise as well.

Statistics
- Average Household Income (2010) $60,927
- Employment (3rd quarter 2015 source DEW BLS) 32,350
- Households (2010 source U.S. Census) 20,868
- Median Age (2010 source U.S. Census) 38.7
- Median Household Income (2010 source U.S. Census) $61,108
- Population (2015 source Weldon Cooper Center) 90,426
- Residential Median Sales Price (2014 source DOU) $333,402

III. Program Characteristics:

The Human Resources Department is a central human resources agency which provides recruitment, compensation, employee relations, training, wellness, benefits, safety and risk management functions to fourteen departments and about 1400 full time and 150 part time employees. Employees are grouped into the following categories: public safety, clerical, technical, trades, professional, and managerial. Virginia is a right to work state, and therefore there are no unions represented in the city. The overall city budget is $602,656,857 and HR's budget is $21.6 million; $20 million constitutes the Risk Budget. Therefore, about $1.6 million is budgeted for salaries and HR programs. A very small budget of $18,000 is allocated for citywide training. Therefore, having talented HR staff to provide innovative programs is essential. The Human Resources department has 13 full time and 1 part time employees. The Human Resources Director reports to the City Manager.

IV. Human Resources:

a. Development of City Vision, Mission Goals and Objectives

This program addresses all of the focus areas, but the following will be highlighted here:

Leadership- HR provided Leadership through having a seat at the table and influencing key stakeholders to commit to the process of creating a Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. None of this previously existed. HR provided leadership in designing the plan, implementing the plan, facilitating retreats and work sessions, and the method for updating the database annually to keep the plan dynamic. Using Business Acumen, HR assessed the environment, used business terminology to describe the benefits of having such a plan to the City Manager, and demonstrated to key stakeholders in the Budget Office how to connect the Strategic Planning document to the budget process and document. The lens of Strategic Orientation was at the core of this initiative.

Communication- This program became successful due to the Strategic Plan serving as a communication vehicle to the organization and public. The HR department collaborated with talented members of the Media Department who put the Vision and Goals on a large banner which is prominently placed inside the door of City Hall for all to see. It is also placed on the city's website, in the budget book, and on employee performance forms.
b. Creation of a Best Practice Performance Management System which links citywide goals to individual employee objectives.

The lens of Strategic Orientation was used in creating this program. HR believed supervisors and employees should think strategically when creating employee objectives. By tying employee objectives to citywide 5 year goals and 3 year objectives, employees would feel a part of moving the city forward and being a part of something very important. An example of the format for linking city goals/objectives to individual objectives can be seen below.

Communication- the focus area of Communication was demonstrated in this initiative. Communication between employees and supervisors was a major requirement in the policy developed by HR for this program, including frequent coaching conversations rather than annual performance discussions. Communication also between HR and the Executive Team, HR and employee groups, HR and attendees in training classes was also critical in preparing and training all employees on how to use this program effectively. Plans are underway to use technology to facilitate routine coaching and performance discussions, and to track evaluations through Perform software by NeoGov.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION 1: PLANNING INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual objectives should be linked to City of Suffolk's and Department's Goals and Objectives. Each employee should have between 2 and 5 objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>City/Department Objective supported</th>
<th>Individual Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Measure Exceeds Expectations Target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meets Expectations Target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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c. Designed and implemented a comprehensive training and change management strategy to support a culture of engagement

The lens of Innovation was critical in the development of a learning strategy for employees and managers. With the knowledge that “training does not equal change,” multiple organizational development strategies in addition to classroom training were employed to assist leaders, managers and supervisors to become more effective leaders and managers. Through retreats, work sessions, training, small group discussions, Senior Staff meetings, Leadership Networks, one on one coaching, and assessment tools, leadership and management skills continued to develop.

The focus areas of talent and culture were present throughout all phases of this effort. A culture of engaged employees is the intended outcome. Leaders, managers and supervisors became more talented managers, and as they did so, they managed their employees better which allowed their employees to grow and experience career progression.

This nomination is for a central human resources agency. The three programs highlighted demonstrate innovation for a Human Resources Department within a small agency. The programs were designed and implemented without the use of an outside consultant. In addition, the Citywide Strategic Planning Initiative, most often is not the role of a Human Resources Department. Through the use of Business Acumen, a Strategic Orientation and Innovation, along with a skill set consistent with internal OD consultants, HR got a seat at the table and was
fortunate to be influential in the creation of this Strategic Plan, the development of performance management tools, and development of managers and supervisors.

**Program Benefits**
The three programs highlighted in this submission have benefited all departments and employees in the organization in the following ways:
1. Provided a communication tool for all employees so they could become aware of and support the city’s priorities and the roadmap to get there. (Strategic Plan)
2. Encouraged employees to receive more meaning from their work by seeing how their job links to the city’s overall plan. (Performance Management Tool)
3. Provided supervisors and managers with opportunities to expand their knowledge, skills and abilities as managers, and therefore to manage employees more effectively. (Training, Coaching and OD Interventions)
4. Created a more positive and engaged workplace, where employees have better morale, and use discretionary effort to become more productive. (Training, Coaching and OD Interventions)

Finally, the impact of these programs was demonstrated by employee responses on our 2017 Engagement Survey. Sixty-six percent of employees completed the survey in July-August of 2017. Since this was Suffolk’s first engagement survey, no pretest - posttest comparisons could be made. However, based on the following information-employee feedback, 2014 performance management survey data and focus group results, and observation by HR staff - it could be argued that prior to 2015, employee engagement and morale was not at a high level and management practices were mostly autocratic. The 2017 Engagement Survey results found that, in general, the Strategic Plan and Performance Management Process accomplished what they were designed to do, and that supervisors and managers improved in their management skills. Below are the results most relevant to the outcomes for the programs highlighted in this submission. The percentages to the right reflect the % of employees who agreed with each question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Suffolk Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have clear work objectives</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a clear understanding of my department’s mission</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how my work supports my department’s mission</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My department’s mission is important to me</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what is expected of me on the job</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think that my performance is evaluated fairly</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The feedback I receive helps me to improve my performance</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor helps me to understand how I contribute to my department’s mission</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor motivates me to be more effective in my job</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor treats people with respect</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor addresses poor performance effectively</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor listens to what I have to say</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor provides constructive feedback on my job performance</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor has good management skills</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor works effectively with people of different backgrounds</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor responds constructively to workplace conflicts</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive frequent feedback on my performance</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor has good technical skills</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor is considerate of my life outside work</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get the information I need to do my job well</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am trusted to carry out my job effectively</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VISION
Suffolk is a nationally renowned, vibrant community committed to the health and vitality of its citizens, which offers strategic growth and diverse opportunities while preserving local character.

MISSION
Enhance and preserve the quality of life in our community through accountable, responsive, and innovative municipal services.

GOALS
- Promote Strong Financial Management and Fiscal Accountability
- Provide Effective and Efficient Programs and Services that are Accountable and Customer Focused
- Promote a Safe, Healthy, and Diverse Community in which to Live, Work, Learn, and Play
- Diversify and Enhance the Local Economy
- Provide Safe and Quality Transportation Options
- Promote Citizen Engagement

It's a Good Time to be in Suffolk
1. Applicant's contact information,
   First Name
   Nancy
   Last Name
   Olivo
   Email Address
   nolivo@suffolkva.us

2. Which award are you applying for this year?
   Agency Award for Excellence - Small

3. Please upload your application. You may only upload 1 document (Preferred formats: Adobe PDF/Microsoft Word - Max file size: 5 MB). If you are unable to upload your document, please contact IPMA-HR at 703/549-7100.

   Award_Submission_Olivo.pdf

2. Thank You!

Award Application Received
   Jun 15, 2018 15:54:59 Success: Email Sent to: dtankersely@ipma-hr.org

Award's Depot
   Jun 15, 2018 15:54:59 Success: Email Sent to: nolivo@suffolkva.us