



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2010 Annual Awards Program

Professional Awards Nomination Form

Deadline for Nominations: March 12, 2010

Complete this form (sections 1, 2, and 3 as applicable) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominee

Professional Award Category (*select only one*):

- ☒ Award for Career Excellence in Honor of Mark E. Keane
- ☐ Award for Career Development in Memory of L. P. Cookingham
- ☐ Assistant Excellence in Leadership Award in Memory of Buford M. Watson, Jr.
- ☐ Academic Award in Memory of Stephen B. Sweeney

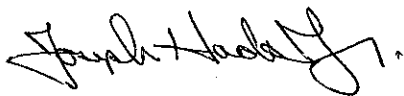
Name of person being nominated: Rita C. McMahon
Title of Nominee: City Manager
Jurisdiction/organization where nominee is employed: City of Painesville, Ohio

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Robert Harrison
Title: City Manager and President, OCMA Jurisdiction: City of Wyoming
Street address: 800 Oak Ave
City: Wyoming State/Province: OH
Zip/Postal Code: 45215-2797 Country: USA
Telephone: 513-842-1350 Fax: 513-821-7952
E-mail: rharrison@wyoming.oh.us

SECTION 3 Endorsement of Elected Official *(for Award for Career Excellence in Honor of Mark E. Keane nominations only)* **or CAO** *(for Assistant Excellence in Leadership Nominations only)*

Signature of
endorsing elected
official or CAO:



Name of endorsing
elected official or
CAO:

Joseph Hada, Jr.

Title:

Council President

Jurisdiction:

City of Painesville

Street address:

7 Richmond Street, P.O. Box 601

City:

Painesville

State/Province:

Ohio

Zip/Postal Code:

44030

Country:

United States

Telephone:

440-352-1461

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jhada@painesville.com

Leadership Skills

Rita McMahon saw the need to plan for the long-term future of Painesville and called upon her background as a planner and her team-focused management approach to put in place the city's first Economic Development Strategic Plan. Rita's leadership style can be described as progressive, supportive and innovative. Examples of this style are provided in the relevant achievements section of this nomination. Rita's leadership skills have created a plan based on economic development principles for long-term sustainability and future growth. In addition, all of this work has resulted in community-wide support and involvement.

Relevant Achievements

Rita spearheaded the Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan that considered all aspects of City operations – from public infrastructure to public-private partnerships. The plan focused on large issues that had faced the City over the past 20 years in an effort to dramatically change the community within five years. The plan addressed blighted and high crime areas, the need for new housing stock, the need to improve the community image, homeless, the aging City utility infrastructure and a lack of a technology infrastructure for inner departmental communication. No problem was too big to be addressed.

Since the first Economic Development Strategic Plan, subsequent plans have been updated to reflect new challenges and opportunities. The direction and leadership Rita has provided over the last 10+ years have resulted in significant improvements and have made Painesville a better place to live, conduct business, and recreate.

During implementation of the updated Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan, concluded in June 2008, immediate and dramatic change occurred. The Plan created a uniform vision that was recognized by elected officials and staff for its progressive, supportive and innovative approach to the continued economic revitalization and growth of both the residential and business community. It identified the cornerstones of Painesville's economic future – retention, expansion and attraction of new and existing businesses; investment in education and training of its citizens; economic diversity and diversity within its work force; government and institutional support, and; the use of innovation and the utilization of technology.

The Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan identified key components to generate immediate and long-term meaningful change within the community. These included improving the

image of the City through the beautification of City entrances, expanded marketing/communications, promotion of historical landmarks and multiple special events.

The plan included improving safety within the community. The Police Chief, City departments, businesses and community representatives were encouraged to identify programs and services to address safety concerns. As a result, a Volunteer in Police Service program was established, business owners and managers were trained in crime prevention strategies, Police Officers were strategically placed in more visible areas throughout the downtown and in key residential areas and one of the first crime free multi-family and rental housing programs was established in Northern Ohio.

The City passed a nuisance ordinance to address problem properties and tenants. Coordination and cooperation with outside government agencies, institutions and organizations was emphasized. Department representatives were asked to increase their participation with non-profit organization and institutions as well as to create additional partnerships with local, regional and state organizations and government entities. The Community Development Department and City Planner were directed to achieve a balanced development of housing options while enhancing the existing residential neighborhoods. Educational programming was offered to inform residents of existing housing programs. Financial incentives for reinvestment and housing rehabilitation programs were expanded. The City's Economic Development Office was assigned the role of ensuring balanced development and redevelopment, seeking additional financial resources to assist exiting business expansions, facilitating downtown development and infill opportunities, attracting key specialty stores and restaurants into the downtown, conducting market analysis and identifying target industries, and developing technologies that allow new investments and promote business-to-business interaction. In addition, all City staff was encouraged to celebrate Painesville's diversity through special events, as well as to serve as facilitators and resources for the community.

At the onset of Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan, a 43 acre City-owned Business Park (Renaissance Business Park) was established resulting in approximately 500 new jobs in 10 years, more than \$82 million in capital investment and the addition of three new companies to Painesville's Top Ten Key Account Employers. The new businesses included: Cintas Corporation, Core Systems Innovation and PCC Airfoils. City Manager Rita McMahon received the Team Neo Asset Creation Award for this project. The award was presented to her by Inside Business Magazine for her foresight in planning and for her innovative approach in attracting new businesses and industries to the region by utilizing the City owned industrial park, City Electric Plant, City Water and City Sewer.

Most recently, City Manager McMahon was the force behind the implementation of the wireless program design called the MuniSynch Wireless System. In collaboration with Beta Strategy Group, a model for the implementation of a municipal wireless network to be used for internal, educational and economic development purposes was developed. The wireless system has created opportunities for collaboration between police, fire and operations personnel as well as with the private sector. A “hot spot” was created within Veteran’s Park in the historic downtown Painesville and on the campus of Lake Erie College. The partnership between the City of Painesville and the College has helped to attract college students into the downtown area. Business and industry have also used the system for more consistent disaster recovery within their plants and data operations.

The Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan led to the creation of a JEDD in place of annexation in an area to the south of Painesville City. After receiving word that Lake East Hospital, a major employer with more than 800 employees and \$700,000 in income tax, the City worked collaboratively with Concord Township to create the JEDD. The territory incorporated into the JEDD included two major employers – University Hospital Systems and Lake Hospital Systems (formerly Lake East Hospital). The JEDD agreement includes City water with the potential to offer City Electric and the MuniSynch Wireless System. More importantly, it enabled the City of Painesville to recover a portion of the income tax revenues that were lost after the hospital’s departure in October 2009.

Another focus of the Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan was identifying additional resources for more specialized projects within the City. Over the past ten years, grants for capital projects have grown as a percentage of the City’s budget. In the last four years over \$14 million in grants have been appropriated to fund capital projects for the City. This year’s grants for special projects include: \$990,000 for parks improvements, \$6,200,000 for property acquisition, environmental remediation and demolition, \$3.7 million for a public/private partnership to develop a 1 megawatt battery for peak power supply at the Electric Plant, and \$1 million for water line/water main replacements. Staff is encouraged to identify and apply for grants.

In addition to the above, the City of Painesville has seen other improvements that include:

- 1) Implementation of Painesville Downtown Organization resulting in improved aesthetics, promotion of the community and various events, as well as improved communication with downtown merchants.

- 2) City Council and community approval and implementation of the Painesville Downtown Master Plan, an 18 month project which incorporated input from the downtown merchants and the residents.
- 3) TLCI Grant award in the amount of \$75,000 for evaluation and development of a transportation and streetscape plan for the downtown, a continuation of the Downtown Master Plan.
- 4) Award of \$2.7 million through the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund for the environmental remediation and demolition of a hospital, allowing the city to develop the 8 acre site which to include a mixture of single family homes, townhouses, condominiums and commercial space.
- 5) New residential housing developments located throughout the City of Painesville. The city has been the #1 location for new housing in Lake County for the past two years.

For City Council and residents, a clearly defined direction for the community has been established. Efforts are focused on the objectives and have resulted in new industrial, commercial and residential development. After the establishment of the Painesville Economic Development Strategic Plan, subsequent plans have focused on the same guiding principles for the revitalization and future economic prosperity of both residents and businesses. This has resulted in a renewed confidence and commitment to investment in Painesville. With proper planning, community support, and a clear direction, the City can achieve its unified goals and objectives.

Management Style

Rita McMahon's experience in planning, the relationships she has developed and cultivated over the years, and her understanding of what is required to move from plan concept to reality are the reasons Painesville continues to make progress. Rita has successfully established a knowledgeable administrative team to support the concerted effort. Her efforts to educate the community drew them in as partners.

Ms. McMahon is highly respected by her departmental staff for her integrity, management style and leadership. Monthly staff meetings always include Rita presenting positive accomplishments and expressing appreciation for those who have helped achieve them. Rita always engages and challenges her management team to strive for the greater good of the City and the community. She takes time to talk with staff and they value her advice and her insight.

Rita C. McMahon
Painesville City Manager

Education

1980 Bachelor of Arts, sociology Cleveland State University
 1982 Master of City and Regional Planning, The Ohio State University

Employment

1982-1989 City of Mentor, Planning Administrator/Community Development Director
 1989-1994 City of Painesville Community Development Director
 1994-1997 City of Sandusky Community Development Director
 1997 to present City of Painesville City Manager/Utilities Director/ Safety Director

Certifications:

AICP Certified Planner by the American Planning Association

Affiliations:

Past President of Lake County Mayors and Manager's Association
 Board Member, Past President and Treasurer of Lifeline Community Action Agency
 Board Member of Lake County United Way
 Member of American Planning Association and Certified Planners Association
 Member of International City Managers Association
 Member Ohio APA
 Member OCMA
 Past President and Board member of the Ohio City/County Manager's Association
 Past Board member of Ohio Planning Conference
 Past Board member of Northeast Ohio Area-wide Coordinating Agency

Publication:

Conservation through Cogeneration and Districts Heating: Prospects for Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1982, Dr. Oscar Fisch, Michael Greene, Rita McMahon.

Major Accomplishments:

Regional Collaboration: Established multiple avenues for regional collaboration and shared income tax revenues with neighboring townships using JEDD's, TIFF's and CEDA's.

Annexation for Growth: Led the fight to annex over 2,000 acres of land and provide new growth potential for the next 20 years to the community.

Renaissance Business Park Acquisition: Created a 40 acre City Owned Business Park through Annexation. Today, this business park is home to Cintas Corp, Core Systems and PCC Airfoils. This development added three top ten companies to the City employing nearly 500 employees with entry level pay positions between \$10 - \$16 per hour.

300 Acre City Planned Development: Beginning the project in 1997, it was developed as a 300 acre PUD Development with TIF Financing. This development is projected to create more than 8,000 permanent jobs at its completion.

First MuniSynch Wireless System: Through a partnership with Beta Strategies she pushed for the installation one of the first of its kind extensive Wireless Infrastructure designed to “synch” municipal resources and connect systems, people and infrastructure to focus municipal collaboration.

State, Federal and Local Grants: Competitive in leveraging City Resources with State and Federal Opportunities. Since 2003 has managed more than \$16.5 million dollars in state, federal and local grants to bring projects to fruition.

Residential Development – Worked to diversify the housing stock within the community approving 11 new housing development plans.

Comprehensive Planning – Established the City’s Comprehensive Plan with multiple updates, The City’s Downtown Master Plan, the City’s Economic Development Five Year Strategic Plan and the Downtown Streetscape Plan which is in process. These plans have resulted in significant City departmental and regional collaborations.

Crime Free Multi and Rental Housing – Worked to obtain one of the first and only crime free housing programs in Northeast Ohio reducing overall crime over the past eight years consecutively by more than 48% overall within the City.

Main Street Community/ Historic Preservation– Established multiple historic districts within the City and established the community as a Main Street Program through Heritage Ohio and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Modernization of Municipal Utilities: As Utility Director has over seen the modernization and redevelopment of the Water Plant, Waste Water Plant and Electric Plant while maintaining competitive rates for customers.

Enhanced Growth in Parks: Worked to expand the City’s park system through strategic property acquisition using grants and creative financing adding over 30 acres of park land to a densely developed community.

Administration: Established an employee driven Health / Benefits Committee, developed a cohesive management team driven by community goals and objectives not departmental driven. Created City wide teams around safety, facilities and equipment to standardize and provide consistency between organizational areas.

Awards and Recognitions:

- Recipient of the Manny Award,
- Team Neo Economic Development Impact Award
- CAFR Awards for 22 years of excellence in budget reporting
- Ohio Planning Conference – Outstanding Contributions to the Board of Trustees 1998-2002
- Painesville City Blockwatch – Award of Support – 2000
- Lake County Community Development Corporation – Community Housing Advocate – 2001
- Moorish CRC – Recognition of Contributions to the Development of Moorish Homes II – 2002
- Stellar Performer – Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs - 2006
- Mildred P. Wilson Award – Lifeline – 2007
- ICMA – 25 years of Service – 2007
- Martin Luther King, Jr. – Civic Award by St. John the Baptist – 2009