

City of Bethel Action Memorandum

Action memorandum No.	22-37		
Date action introduced:	12-13-2022	Introduced by:	Peter A. Williams, City Manager
Date action taken:	12-13-2022	Approved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Denied
Confirmed by:	K M		

Action Title: Direct Administration to hire Xavier Mason as Finance Director at the salary of \$130,000 per year per Alaska Statute 29.20.360.

Attachment(s): None

Amount of fiscal impact:	Source	Account information:
\$130,000	Funds in FY 2023 Budget	100-53-13401
Route to Department/Individual	Initials	Remarks
Administration	<i>PW</i>	I recommend the City hire Xavier Mason as Finance Director.

Summary Statement

Xavier Mason served as Acting Finance Director for the Finance Department for 14 months prior to serving as Deputy Finance Director for eight months. With this offer, Mr. Mason pledged to stay with the City of Bethel long-term to continue leading the Finance Department and increasing fiscal stability.

With the assistance of the Finance Team, Mason learned how to perform most functions for which his staff is responsible, including utility billing and hauled utility scheduling, and sales tax payments and licensing. He understands how to use the City's Caselle Accounting software to find key data and documents, print reports, and make updates. Mr. Mason was instrumental during union contract negotiations for his impact assessments for various union salary scenarios and his suggestions at the bargaining table.

Mr. Mason graduated as one of the top students in the University of Alaska System in 2015 as the UAA Commencement Speaker, earning a bachelor's in business administration with a major in Management & Marketing. He was awarded the following honors: Leadership Distinction, Leadership Honors, University Honors Scholar, Cum Laude, and College of Business Public Policy Student Leader of the Year. Upon graduating, he interned with Senator Dan Sullivan. Mason subsequently earned two graduate degrees from the University of Oxford: a Master of Science in Education and a Master of Business Administration. In 2021, Mason was designated one of Alaska's Top 40 Under 40.

Mr. Mason revitalized the City's dormant investment portfolio by directing \$16 million to various layered certificate of deposit accounts, which will earn the city more than \$600,000 in the next five years.

Xavier Mason also performs excellently under pressure. After two months of employment with the city, he was presented with the challenge of producing the FY 2022 Budget in five days. He then oversaw the FY 2021 audit process from the beginning, working tirelessly to satisfy BDO's information requests involving purchases, transactions, grants, journal entries, and general ledger management.

Mr. Mason was elected for a two-year term (2021-2023) to serve as the Treasurer for the governing board of the Alaska Government Finance Officers Association. He is also on the board of the Alaska Remote Sellers Commission, the group responsible for securing tax collections for the City of Bethel from online orders.

Mr. Mason built rapport with his staff members, and routinely fosters teamwork and joint problem-solving. He leads from the heart with full dedication, determination, and commitment to get the job done right. "I like to continuously make small improvements, because I know they will result in big changes over time," summarized Mason. One of the reasons Xavier has been successful during his tenure is that he prioritizes his staff members. He understands that without the Finance team all working together, nothing can be achieved.