



EC-20-55
City of Albuquerque
Office of the Mayor

Timothy M. Keller, Mayor
Interoffice Memorandum

March 11, 2020

To: Pat Davis, President, City Council
From: Timothy M. Keller, Mayor *TJK*
Subject: Appointment of Ethan Watson to the Position of City Clerk

Ethan Watson is a native of Albuquerque, New Mexico who graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2011 and received a Bachelor's Degree from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia in 2006. Ethan is currently the Acting City Clerk and was previously the Deputy City Clerk for Open Government in the Clerk's Office. In that role, he implemented Mayor Keller's new vision for processing of public records requests, and built a team to assist all City Departments in handling request for public records. Prior to working in the Clerk's Office, Mr. Watson was an attorney in private practice where he represented public entities across the state in a variety of areas including election law, the Inspection of Public Records Act, and the Open Meetings Act.

In addition to his work promoting open government, Mr. Watson participates in various organizations within the community. He is serving in his second term as the president of the Albuquerque Bar Association.

I ask you for your support in confirming this highly qualified individual to the position of City Clerk. He has a strong background in open government and has built a strong team in the Clerk's Office around public records.

Ethan Watson

Position Sought: City Clerk for the City of Albuquerque

Summary: Enthusiastic attorney and acting City Clerk for the City of Albuquerque. Experience with public administration, civil litigation for public entities, election law, and records management.

Experience:

**Acting City Clerk
City of Albuquerque**

**Albuquerque, NM
December, 2019-present**

- Managed the IPRA/Transparency Program in the Office of the City Clerk including overseeing personnel managing IPRA requests, drafting policies and procedures for processing requests, and working with City Departments to implement new workflow.
- Served as principal liason to the City's Board of Ethics and Campaign Practices, filtered Ethics and Campaign Practice complaints through the City Clerk's complaint diversion process, mediated complaints with parties and drafted settlement agreements reflecting the parties agreement, worked with the Board of Ethics to revise the Board's rules.
- Worked to complete records retention schedule for the City, implement triage program on records retention, and create training program for new employees on records retention and public records requests.
- Oversaw all aspects of the management of the budget in the Office of the City Clerk. Hired new contract hearing officers to conduct hearings in the Office of Administrative Hearings.

**Deputy City Clerk for Open Government
City of Albuquerque**

**Albuquerque, NM
August 2018-December 2019**

- Created and managed centralized team for processing of public records requests including finding funding for positions mid-FY19 and obtaining additional funding as part of FY20 budget cycle, hiring and filing all positions, and implementing new workflows.
- Managed department's budget process including creating budget, issue papers, and other required items. Hired new contract hearing officers and managed contracts related to same.
- Hired contract interpreters for Administrative Hearings to increase accessibility for non-english speaking parties.
- Worked with all City Departments to experiment with new processes regarding the filing of liens.
- Completed records retention schedule and obtained approval of schedule by Records Retention and Disposition Committee and City Chief Administrative Officer.
- General management of Department operations.

**Attorney
German Burnette & Associates**

**Albuquerque, NM
August 2011 – August 2018**

- Litigate all aspects of employment, civil rights, Inspection of Public Records Act, and personal injury cases, including pre- and post-trial motions, discovery, depositions, and appeals on behalf of the State of New Mexico, the City of Albuquerque, the New Mexico Association of Counties, school districts, and charter schools.
- Research and draft memoranda on legal issues in civil rights and employment cases.
- Advise clients regarding election law matters and regarding compliance with Inspection of Public Records Act.
- Analyze legislation pending in the New Mexico legislature for public entity clients.