

Kipling C. Belcher

231.493.8740

1964deuce225@gmail.com

April 18, 2024

Mr. Chet Janik
c/o Leelanau County Board of Commissioners
8527 Government Center Drive
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Dear Mr. Janik:

The purpose of my letter is to inform you of my intention to be appointed Leelanau County's next County Administrator and to highlight my professional responsibilities and educational achievements aligning with this position's requirements—a combination making me your ideal candidate choice.

For the past 34 years I have been employed as an officer with the Michigan State Police (MSP). I have been a command officer with the agency for the last 24 years, serving in uniform and plainclothes leadership roles. During my task force unit assignments, I was responsible for directing detectives in their efforts toward identifying and arresting chemical drug suppliers. I wrote successful federal grant applications, properly managed team budgets, and worked with municipal leaders to ensure their drug enforcement/serious crime concerns were addressed. I expanded cooperative efforts with state and federal prosecutors, to ensure all resources were available to disrupt drug trafficking organizations.

In my role as a uniform commander, using feedback from law enforcement and municipal leaders, and statistical crime data, I directed the deployment of trooper resources to communities and roadways in the MSP Cadillac Post's service area. I adhered to budgeted resources, resolved critical incidents, and handled counseling and disciplinary matters. In my current task force commander role, I oversee three MSP drug teams working in 19 northern Michigan counties. Working with members of city councils and county commissions, and with sheriffs and chiefs, I ensure drug investigative services are efficiently provided throughout the region. I have effectively utilized police resources to investigate overdose incidents, and improved team supervisor interaction with drug treatment and prevention programs.

In 2013, I enrolled at Spring Arbor University (SAU), and completed an undergraduate degree in organizational management. In 2016, I completed SAU's Master's in Business Administration program, with a concentration in Strategic Leadership. I parlayed many of the principles I learned in these programs, including marketing, project management, financial management, and business ethics, into becoming a more effective leader in my current role. This training has complemented my leadership style: a calm, approachable, communicative leader, who utilizes the strengths of his team members to actively pursue organizational goals. I believe in establishing dynamic, impactful, professional connections with my employees and empowering them toward greater achievements.

My current job duties are multivariant in nature: I am responsible for ensuring compliance with employment contract language from several unions, for detectives' compliance with state, federal, and local statutory provisions, for the hiring/removal of select civilian personnel, and for the completion of performance reviews for enlisted MSP personnel. My tasks include overseeing the application and reporting process for federal Byrne grant funds, a core component of funding for my teams. It is my responsibility to ensure strategic planning principles appear in each grant application, depicting efficient and effective goals and objectives designed to mitigate or eliminate chemical drug distribution with short and long-term initiatives. I have endorsed and my teams have thrived on enhancing relationships with federal enforcement agencies (e.g., DEA, HSI), forming partnerships with civilian drug treatment and prevention organizations, and working cohesively with municipal boards and officials to effectively combat the presence of opioids, lessen addiction rates, and imprison persons responsible for overdose deaths.

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I am also responsible for crafting annual task force operating budgets, in concert with each team's fiduciary agent (member of a participating entity's finance office) and the team commander. Revenue streams to fund operations include Byrne grant monies, adjudicated team funds, and donations from participating municipal entities/private groups. It is my duty to ensure revenue streams remain intact and that funds are spent in accordance with grant narrative provisions, within the requirements of team bylaw documents (which I am responsible for authoring), or according to the guidelines of the donating entity. I am charged with tracking/adhering to several budgets. I have been actively involved with MSP Seventh District-wide policy enactment. I was one of the authors creating policy for the response of northern Michigan MSP personnel to drug overdose scenes, the content of which includes aspects of scene security, evidence collection, postmortem examinations, and requests by other municipalities for similar assistance.

I have successfully navigated circumstances of extreme conflict, improving working relationships among opposing parties and accomplishing organizational goals. One of these situations involved a criminal case that fractured the relationship between the Traverse Narcotics Team and the prosecuting attorney's office and circuit court. Another situation involved a Michigan State Police mandate to add local enforcement members to the Straits Area Narcotics Enforcement team, engendering resentment among sheriffs/chiefs and prompting them to consider leaving the task force. My recipe for success was simple: establish an understanding of the issues creating the conflict, continuously engage all entities/persons involved in the conflict (paired with a thorough understanding of each person's role in that process), demonstrate emotional intelligence skills when handling difficult conversations with stakeholders, maintain focus on public service mandates and expectations, and provide continuous feedback. With regard to individual staff member conflict, I resolved most of these situations with existing staff members remaining in place.

If I am appointed to this position, I will be an active, visible, and inspirational county administrator for Leelanau County. I will perform my job responsibilities professionally and responsibly, in consideration of the expectations of municipal leaders and community members. Working jointly with the board of commissioners, I will ensure services are provided to the county's citizens in a competent, proactive, and respectful manner, and that employees and citizens alike have an active voice in governmental decision-making processes. I will dutifully focus on maintaining the fiscal solvency of Leelanau County, on project management duties, and with harnessing the trust and energy of residents relative to Leelanau County business. Just as importantly, I will be a county administrator committed to actively researching and discussing information/ideas and plans with commissioners, to maintaining an excellent relationship with them, and to carrying out their instructions. I am the right person for selection to this position.

Respectfully,



Kipling C. Belcher

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Contact

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Teaching Experience

Spring Arbor University
Adjunct Professor
MBA degree program

Department Instructor
CID Detective Courses

Professional Memberships

International Association
of Chiefs of Police

Grand Traverse County
Drug-Free Task Force

Leelanau County
Substance Abuse
Task Force

Families Against Narcotics
Grand Traverse

Coalition to Combat Human
Trafficking-Grand Traverse

Profile

24 years of command-level experience with the Michigan State Police (MSP). Significant administrative and budgetary experience with post and district level operations including data-driven personnel deployment, critical incident management, policy creation and budget development, enlisted and civilian staff hiring, promotion, mentoring, counseling, and discipline. Substantial experience in working with municipal boards, elected and appointed leaders, special interest groups, and with preparation and presentation of materials for media, public, partner agency, and MSP departmental audiences.

Education

August 2016
MBA • Spring Arbor University • Gaylord, MI
Concentration: Strategic Leadership
Thesis: Northern Michigan Hospital Security Concerns

August 2015
B.S., Business Administration • Spring Arbor University • Traverse City, MI
Concentration: Organizational Management
Capstone Project: MSP Promotional Practice History

January – June 2014
School of Police Staff & Command • Michigan State University • Lansing, MI
Final Project: MSP Promotional Practice History

1989
106th Trooper Recruit School • Michigan State Police • Lansing, MI
Graduate

1989
44th Mid-Michigan Police Academy • Lansing Community College • Lansing, MI
Graduate

1983 - 1986
Undergraduate Studies • University of Michigan-Flint • Flint, MI
Concentration: Criminal Justice and Chemistry

Technical Proficiencies

Electronic payroll, supply requisition, invoice payment; service contract development and implementation

Online performance appraisal systems, federal and state grant applications and required reports

Microsoft Office suite, including incorporation of video/graphs, Excel charting, and PowerPoint presentations

Experience

October 2015 - Present

Multijurisdictional Task Force Commander • Michigan State Police Seventh District • Gaylord, MI

- Supervise three task force teams working in 19 counties.
- Assess effectiveness of operations; revise policies/procedures as needed.
- Verify suitability of civil forfeiture action and track case progress.
- Foster and maintain relationships with prosecutors and local, state, and federal law enforcement partners as well as provide case briefings for media partners.
- Participate in organized drug treatment and education program efforts.
- Provide weekly team activity briefings to district command.
- Oversee Byrne/JAG grant compliance and utilization of funds.
- Coordinate MSP/municipal resources for drug overdose investigations.
- Manage team board meetings; approve agendas and related documents.
- Provide mentoring and counseling to team enlisted and civilian personnel.
- Participate in district inspections at posts and team locations.
- Special event planning, including resource assessment and acquisition.

November 2011 – October 2015

Assistant Post Commander • Michigan State Police Cadillac Post • Cadillac, MI

- Supervise 40 uniform personnel working in five counties.
- Oversee scheduling for routine and special events to ensure post/district resources are effectively utilized.
- Utilize data-driven metric information to effectively deploy patrol resources.
- Foster and maintain relationships with prosecutors and local, state, and federal law enforcement partners, and with the media.
- Identify and satisfy continuing education training and equipment needs.
- Oversee post budgets for overtime, supplies, and special operations.
- Complete detailed patrol activity reports and community policing plans.
- Verify adherence to departmental vehicle pursuit and use-of-force policies.
- Initiate incident command system protocols at critical event/crime scenes.

July 2012 – February 2013

Acting Post Commander • Michigan State Police Houghton Lake Post • Houghton Lake, MI

- Supervise 30 uniform personnel working in four counties.
- Oversee scheduling for routine and special events to ensure post/district resources are effectively utilized.
- Utilize data-driven metric information to effectively deploy patrol resources.
- Foster and maintain relationships with prosecutors and local, state, and federal law enforcement partners, and with the media.
- Oversee post budgets for overtime, supplies, and special operations.
- Complete detailed patrol activity reports and community policing plans.
- Verify adherence to departmental vehicle pursuit and use-of-force policies.
- Initiate incident command system protocols at critical event/crime scenes.

July 1999 – November 2011

Task Force Commander • Traverse Narcotics Team • Traverse City, MI

- Supervise daily activities of 13 undercover officers working in nine counties.
- Review incoming tip information; prioritize investigative action.
- Oversee controlled substances purchases; ensure policy adherence.
- Conduct tactical search warrant operations.
- Oversee and balance team budgets for overtime and supplies/equipment.
- Prepare monthly, quarterly, and annual activity and grant reports.
- Maintain integrity of property rooms containing cash/firearms/drugs.
- Provide drug educational presentations to private and municipal groups.
- Approve and oversee civil forfeiture action.
- Foster and maintain relationships with prosecutors and local, state, and federal law enforcement partners, and conduct media briefings on significant cases.