

CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
COUNCILOR RACHEL M. MILLER  
CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT



March 31, 2023

Ms. Tina L. Mastroianni  
City Clerk  
City Hall  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Ms. Mastroianni:

Please be advised that, in accordance with Chapter 2021-17, No. 238, I am hereby appointing Kevin Essington of 12 Aldrich Terrace, Providence, Rhode Island 02906, to the Sustainability Commission, for a term to expire on April 6, 2029.

Sincerely,

Rachel M. Miller  
Council President

IN CITY COUNCIL

APR 06 2023

READ

WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

CLERK

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## Senior Non-Profit Manager

*25+ years' success leading conservation, sustainability, and social change efforts for nonprofit organizations*

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Collaborative, results-oriented leader with repeated success guiding cross-functional teams in the identification, planning, and execution of conservation and social change. Expert presenter, negotiator, and company representative with a talent for generating enthusiasm and commitment to the mission, gaining public and private support, and managing financial resources. Forges solid relationships with partners. Inspires and motivates teams.

### Highlights of Expertise

- Strategic Business Planning
- Process Redesign / Change Management
- Budget Administration / Management
- Raising Capital / Funding
- Marketing and Promotion
- Government Agencies and Policy Analysis
- Natural Resource Management / Sustainability
- Habitat and Wildlife Conservation
- Philanthropic Leadership / Program Management
- Team Building and Staff Development

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## Career Experience

Roger Williams Park Conservancy, Providence, Rhode Island

*Carried new organization through the COVID19 pandemic, while tripling audience and fundraising outcomes.*

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (2020 to Present)**

Execute all business, fundraising, and programmatic needs, serving the people of Providence and Rhode Island in Rhode Island's most popular municipal park.

- ♦ Tripled philanthropic revenue in two years through local grantmaking and individual donor support.
- ♦ Expanded work to include community organizing and multi-cultural programming for South Providence residents, adding new full-time and seasonal positions.
- ♦ Overhauled business systems to increase efficiency by 20% or more, and managed board development to increase diversity and inclusion.

The Trust for Public Land, Boston, Massachusetts

*Earned two promotions following highly successful leadership in cultivating award-winning urban conservation programs within Massachusetts and Rhode Island for this national land conservation and park creation organization.*

### **ASSOC. VICE PRESIDENT OF FIELD PROGRAMS / SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND AREA DIRECTOR (2011 to 2020)**

Direct financial performance and mission delivery; create annual \$2.1M operational budget, long-term business plans, and investments in park infrastructure/programming to support sustainable communities and healthful living.

- ♦ Created and disseminated a unified strategic planning framework to all field offices changing cultures to that of data, measures, and case-making.
- ♦ Initiated business transition in Massachusetts from project-based to programmatic approach, resulting in a renewed advisory board that tripled their giving and drove positive culture change.
- ♦ Increased total philanthropic support five-fold in Massachusetts over a seven-year period through investment in philanthropic professionals, dedication to donor engagement, and compelling storytelling.
- ♦ Built a 12-person multidisciplinary team, fostering collaboration, maximizing investments, and optimizing results; received praise from supervisors and direct reports for leadership skills.
- ♦ Oversaw the creation of 32 new or improved public spaces in five New England states, impacting almost 80,000 people within a 10-minute walk and totaling 8,425 acres of land.

*continued...*



The Nature Conservancy, Providence, Rhode Island

*Represented Conservancy and its interests to media, general public, and local and state government agencies. Advocated for the environment, directing domestic and international habitat and wildlife conservation plans, policies, and funding.*

**DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS (2008 to 2011)**

Testified regularly before Rhode Island General Assembly and congressional delegation concerning appropriations, conservation funding, environmental and marine policies, climate change, and renewable energy.

- ♦ Negotiated land and water policy outcomes including offshore Marine Spatial Planning, Wild and Scenic River status, and dam removals; successfully negotiated adaptation funding in 2009 federal cap-and-trade bill.
- ♦ Co-led successful statewide campaign supporting multimillion-dollar public funding measure for state land.
- ♦ Collaborated with Grenada, West Indies, stakeholders in creating conservation plan for critically endangered Grenada Dove, which drove acquisition and protection of critical habitat in 2011.
- ♦ Supervised Rhode Island marine and estuary program ensuring biodiversity protections and expanded restoration programs, such as oyster reef seeding and construction in Charlestown, RI.
- ♦ Conducted statewide branding initiative, increasing media exposure tenfold through earned media and direct communications, contributing to 10% fundraising growth in two-year period.

The Nature Conservancy, North Stonington, Connecticut

*Coordinated land acquisition and policy change through funding, real estate exchanges, and negotiation, resulting in the conservation of thousands of acres of forest between New York and Boston.*

**DIRECTOR, PAWCATUCK BORDERLANDS PROGRAM (2001 to 2008)**

Directed short-and long-range strategic conservation planning, identified and solved cross-functional problems, built public support and community understanding, and presented land and water education programs.

- ♦ Acquired 4,000 acres (4% of a 200-square-mile conservation priority area) of targeted parcels over a five-year period; purchased and developed the \$27.5M Tillinghast Pond Management Area in West Greenwich, RI.
- ♦ Secured over \$10M in private donations for capital and operations support by making the case for conservation of the largest unfragmented forest landscape between Boston and New York.
- ♦ Assembled a conservation-and-economic growth collaborative comprising 20 towns in Connecticut and Rhode Island, which drove new land-use policies focused on village and density growth in two towns.

Additional Experience

**Executive Director** ■ Montezuma Land Conservancy, Cortez, Colorado

**Environmental Review Coordinator** ■ The Nature Conservancy, Fort Collins, Colorado

**Technical Writer** ■ ENI, Inc., Rocky Flats, Colorado

**Carpenter** ■ Dembergh Construction, Ketchum, Idaho

## **Education**

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Master of Environmental Policy and Management

*University of Denver, Denver, Colorado*

Composed San Luis Valley conservation plan for The Nature Conservancy in Colorado, which successfully made the case for the acquisition of the \$31M Baca Ranch for the US National Park system in 2004.

Bachelor of Arts in History

*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan*

## **Publications, Awards, Service & References**

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### Publications

McKinney, M. & Essington, K. (2006, January). Learning to Think and Act Like a Region. *Land Lines*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

### Awards

**Mayor's Greenovate Award**, City of Boston, 2016

**Hazel Hughes Award**, Somerville Community Corporation, 2013

**Award of Excellence**, Town of Exeter Planning Board, 2012

**Salomon Award**, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association, 2008

**Senator John H. Chafee Conservation Award**, Environment Council of Rhode Island, 2007

**Award for Conservation Excellence**, Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts, 2001

### Service

One Neighborhood Builders, Board Member

Providence Sustainability Commission, Commissioner

U.S. Soccer Federation, Grassroots-level certified referee

### References

Jeff Danter, PhD, Senior Vice President of Field Programs, Trust for Public Land

Margie Kim, Chief Philanthropy Officer, Los Angeles Philharmonic

Jad Daley, President and CEO, American Forests

Janet Coit, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, and Deputy NOAA Administrator



**SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
**CITY OF PROVIDENCE**

Tina L. Mastroianni  
City Clerk  
City of Providence

**RE: Recommendation to Appoint Kevin Essington to Sustainability Commission**

To Ms. Mastroianni,

The Sustainability Commission recommends that the City Council appoint Kevin Essington as a member of the Sustainability Commission. In executive session on March 21, 2022 the Commission considered three candidates and voted unanimously to nominate Kevin Essington. Per Ordinance 2021-17 Article VIII ½, the City Council is responsible for appointing three members to the Sustainability Commission. Currently, one of these seats is vacant.

Mr. Essington is the Executive Director of the Roger Williams Park Conservancy in Providence. Under his leadership, the Roger Williams Park Conservancy expanded its work to include community organizing and multi-cultural programming for South Providence residents. His decades of experience working and volunteering for nonprofit organizations in the conservation and sustainability sector will be a valuable addition to the commission.

I have included Mr. Essington's resume and a letter of support for his nomination for fellow Sustainability Commission member, Priscilla De La Cruz. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julian Drix", is written over a horizontal line.

Julian Drix, Chair  
Sustainability Commission  
City of Providence

CC:  
Kevin Proft, Deputy Director of Sustainability





*Connecting People with Nature*

# Audubon Society of Rhode Island

August 31, 2022

Providence City Council  
25 Dorrance St  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Member of Providence City Council:

It is my pleasure to recommend Kevin Essington to serve on the Providence Sustainability Commission. I am writing today to express support for Essington's appointment to the Commission as a colleague and fellow member of the Providence Sustainability Commission.

In my professional and volunteer roles, I have had the great opportunity to work with Kevin Essington. I met him in early 2020, shortly after he became the Executive Director of the Roger Williams Park Conservancy, and I began to volunteer in the Conservancy's Programs Committee. The Conservancy's mission is to sustain and enhance Roger Williams Park as a vibrant public space for all, and as the nonprofit organization's Executive Director Essington has lived up to that mission but also expanded the Conservancy's work to include community organizing and multi-cultural programming for South Providence residents, with a focus on hiring locally within the community.

I continue to witness his dedication to making Providence a more sustainable and healthier city in my current role at the Audubon Society of RI. I get to work with Essington and his small but very talented team to improve the water quality at Roger Williams Park Zoo through nature-based solutions through a collaborative effort with the Providence Parks Department and various environmental nonprofits, state agencies, and philanthropic groups—the Providence Stormwater Innovation Center. Essington has not only been a central partner since the formation of the collaborative effort to address issues of stormwater pollution, but he has also ensured that the surrounding communities are engaged in the 'People's Park.'

Kevin Essington would be a fantastic addition to the Providence Sustainability Commission, because of not only the positive affect his professional and volunteer work has had on our communities but also because of his passion for climate justice and appreciation for our multi-cultural city and the people who are doing the work in their neighborhoods.

Please support Kevin Essington's nomination to the Providence Sustainability Commission, fellow commission members and myself, are eager to work with him to support the City and the Providence Racial and Environmental Justice Committee (REJC) in its implementation of the Climate Justice Plan. His 25 years of experience in the environmental sector, working on land, parks, climate, water, marine preservation, restoration, and advocacy will be invaluable to the Commission.

Sincerely,

Priscilla De La Cruz