

**ERIK J LITZENBERG**

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(505) 473-2290 eriklitz@gmail.com

September 29, 2025

Members of the Los Alamos Fire Chief Selection Committee-

This letter is submitted to express my interest in being the next Fire Chief for Los Alamos County. I believe that I have the experiential and educational background to successfully lead the Los Alamos Fire Department, and to be a solid contributor to the Los Alamos County leadership team. I am certain that I can help Los Alamos continue to thrive.

In total, I have approximately 20 years in executive and command level leadership in departments of equal or greater size than Los Alamos Fire Department. I am currently the Senior Fire Advisor for the International Association of Fire Chiefs, an assignment that has allowed me to continue to expand my knowledge and capabilities in advocacy, policy formation, and governmental influence; leadership, team, and program development; and response preparedness and coordination. I am the incoming Chair of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Executive Board, a position in which I am tasked with balancing federal, state, and local perspectives to provide interagency leadership. Prior to that, I served in multiple positions in the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County, including Fire Chief for both organizations and City Manager for the former. I exercised early retirement from government for my current assignment, but I was aware that there might come a time that returning to local government would be a consideration. I believe now is that time.

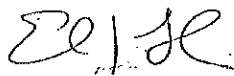
I also have a diverse and comprehensive educational background. Most recently I earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Sports Administration during which I did research on leadership, culture, and organizational development in emergency response organizations. The curriculum allowed me to study organizational and administrative realities in athletics and apply them to public agencies. Prior to this I earned two related master's degrees as well as a bachelor degree. I have completed the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy, the Executive Academy at the Emergency Management Institute, and the Executive Leaders Program at the Naval Postgraduate Academy, as well as various local and state level leadership programs. Related to technical competency, I completed a state certified fire academy, many National Fire Academy and National Wildfire Coordinating Group courses, I am a NM licensed Paramedic and I am certified to be a Haz Mat Tech.

Specific to the LAFD requirements listed in the job announcement, I provide the following qualifications, which can be corroborated by my listed professional references.

- I do not anticipate complications receiving the required DOE "Q" clearance.
- I have planned, directed, and reviewed operations from an all-hazards perspective, coordinated functions with departments and external agencies, and provided comprehensive and high-level administrative support to city and county leadership.
- I have extensive experience with International Association of Firefighters local leadership and international leadership and programs.
- I have experience leading multiple organizations of equal or greater size in terms of personnel, budget, and call volume; leading and implementing infrastructure projects, apparatus design, and equipment purchases; and leading organizations through accreditation and audit processes.
- I currently work directly with various federal and state agencies as a Chair at the National Interagency Fire Center and still respond as part of a national complex incident management team during large-scale disaster response.
- I have a history of creative and innovative program development, strategic planning, organizational management, and community risk reduction. I led the development of mobile integrated health and community risk reduction programs in Santa Fe.
- For many years I have exemplified advanced written and spoken communication skills and customer service. As a Public Information and Liaison Officer for complex incident management teams I am directly responsible for communications with and engagement of members of communities and partner organizations.
- I have a history of success in team building in many organizations and am currently a leadership coach and mentor through multiple national programs.
- I have a demonstrated ability to be transparent, objective, adaptable, flexible, and visible in leadership. I have always been relationship oriented and have a history of building trust with both internal and external stakeholders.
- I was specifically hired as Fire Chief, City Manager, and Senior Advisor because of my ability to bring fresh ideas and vision delivered with energy and enthusiasm.

Most significantly, I have led groups of individuals who have done all the aforementioned tasks as part of a team – it is of that of which I am the proudest. I look forward to going through the Fire Chief selection process so I can highlight what I will bring to the Los Alamos Fire Department, Los Alamos County, and the community of Los Alamos.

Respectfully submitted,



Erik J Litzenberg

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### **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

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- ❖ **Liderazgo Consulting** **November 2020 to present**
  - Owner and CEO/ Lead Consultant
  - International Association of Fire Chiefs - Senior Wildland Fire Advisor
  - National Interagency Fire Center
    - National Wildfire Coordinating Group Executive Board member – Chair
    - National Multiagency Coordination Center - Liaison
  - Complex Incident Management Team – Liaison Officer, Public Information Officer
  - Wildfire Chronicles: Heroism Beyond the Flames Podcast – Creator and host
  - Moore Foundation Community Wildfire Resilience - Advisory panel member
  - Intterra WUI Risk and Mitigation - Research team member
  - FirstNet Authority AT&T - Local government cadre member
  - Ready, Set, Go! Program - National presenter and program creator
  - WUI Chiefs Guide - Co-creator and WUI Chiefs Guide Mentor
  - Fire Department Exchange - Curriculum developer and instructor
  - XPRIZE Wildfire – Satellite Detection and Autonomous Suppression Judge
  
- ❖ **Santa Fe County** **August 2019 to December 2020**
  - Fire Chief
  - Acting Public Safety Director
  
- ❖ **City of Santa Fe** **August 1997 to August 2019**
  - City Manager; July 2018 to August 2019
  - Interim City Manager; April 2018 to July 2018
  - Fire Chief; March 2013 to July 2018
  - Assistant Fire Chief of Operations; June 2009 to March 2013
  - Battalion Chief and Wildland Team Leader; January 2007 to June 2009
  - Interim/Acting Emergency Manager
  - Public Information Officer
  - Head of Wildland Urban Interface and community relations programs
  
- ❖ **New Mexico State Forestry** **2001 to present**
  - Division Supervisor, Task Force Leader, and Liaison; 2005 to present
  - Engine Boss and Interagency Liaison; 2000 to 2005
  
- ❖ **Santa Fe Wildfire** **January 2001 to 2008**
  - Owner/Head of Field Operations
  - Supervisor of 25 contract employees
  - Manager of budget and policy development
  
- ❖ **Santa Fe County Fire Department** **September 1994 to 2006**
  - District Chief; 1999 to 2001
  - Medical Officer; 2001 to 2005

## **FORMAL EDUCATION**

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- ❖ **Doctor of Philosophy, University of New Mexico** **July 2024**
  - Public Administration Minor
  - Departmental Graduate of the Year Award, 2024
  - Dissertation: Social Identity Theory in Emergency Response Organizations
- ❖ **Master of Arts, Naval Postgraduate School** **December 2021**
  - Center for Homeland Defense and Security Program
  - Thesis: America Burning, a Modern Application of an Historic Success
- ❖ **Master of Public Administration, University of New Mexico** **May 2007**
  - Public Management Concentration with a GPA of 4.07
  - Pro Paper: Involving the Community in Fire Protection in Santa Fe, NM
- ❖ **Bachelor of Arts in Kinesiology, University of Colorado** **December 1994**

## **PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

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- ❖ **Executive Academy, Emergency Management Institute:** December, 2017
- ❖ **City of Santa Fe Leadership Training Program, City of Santa Fe:** July, 2015
- ❖ **Leadership New Mexico Core, Leadership New Mexico:** June, 2015
- ❖ **Leadership Santa Fe, Chamber of Commerce:** April, 2013
- ❖ **Executive Leadership Program, Center for Homeland Defense:** February, 2013
- ❖ **Executive Fire Officer Program, National Fire Academy:** November, 2006
- ❖ **Paramedic, University of New Mexico:** June, 2000.

## **PROFESSIONAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

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- ❖ **FIRESCOPE** – January 2023 – present
- ❖ **State of New Mexico Fire Planning Task Force** – August 2022 - present
- ❖ **Moore Foundation Wildfire Resilience Advisory** – June 2022 - present
- ❖ **National Prescribed Fire Program Review** – May 2022 – September 2022
- ❖ **New Mexico Intrastate Mutual Aid System Committee** – December 2016 – 2019
- ❖ **Santa Fe Prep School Board of Trustees and Alumni Board** – August 2016 - present
- ❖ **Rio Grande School Board of Trustees** - October 2015 – September 2018
- ❖ **Wildland Fire Leadership Council** – August 2015 – December 2020
- ❖ **City of Santa Fe IT Governance Committee** – January 2015 - present
- ❖ **Wildland Fire Executive Committee** – October 2014 - August 2015
- ❖ **Regional Emergency Communication Center** - January 2013 – December 2020
- ❖ **Salvation Army Advisory Board** - January 2011 – March 2013
- ❖ **IAFC Wildland Fire Policy Committee** – August 2010 - present
- ❖ **Santa Fe Dispatch Zone Advisory Board** - July 2009 – March 2013