

Position Description

Legal Department
General Counsel



Hudson River Park Trust

Reports to: President & CEO

Hours/Week: 37.5

FLSA: Exempt

Hudson River Park Trust (the “Trust”) seeks an attorney with broad legal knowledge, excellent judgment and negotiation skills, and managerial experience to lead its Legal Department. The General Counsel will manage an in-house legal staff of four as well as multiple retainers with outside counsel, and will provide legal advice and guidance to the Trust’s Board of Directors and staff on a wide variety and large volume of matters. This highly motivated and hands-on attorney will report directly to the President and CEO and be a key member of the Trust’s executive management team. The General Counsel will have day-to-day responsibility for addressing complex contractual, transactional, compliance, regulatory, and agency management issues. The position requires superior leadership, legal drafting, organization, negotiation, interpersonal and communications skills.

Background:

The Trust is a public benefit corporation created by act of the New York State Legislature and a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The mission of the Trust is to design, construct and maintain a prominent, and very heavily used, 4 mile long waterfront park on the west side of Manhattan. The Park includes landscaped public piers and display gardens, lawn areas, ecological planting zones, athletic fields, esplanades, docks, public sculptures and other special features. Also located within the Park are several commercial facilities, including the Pier 40 parking garage, Pier 57 development site, Circle Line excursion piers and Chelsea Piers. The Trust covers its \$21 million annual operating budget through parking revenue, rents, permits, fees, grants, donations generated by a “Friends” organization and other private sources. Approximately 75% of the Park has been constructed with a mix of State, City and Federal capital funding. Total investment in all facilities within the Park is approximately \$540 million.

The Legal Department provides advice and representation to the Trust and its Board of Directors on a broad range of matters related to Park development, maintenance and operation. These matters include developing and ensuring conformity with Trust governance, procurement and employee policies and regulations; negotiating and drafting development and funding agreements, construction contracts, leases, permits and a variety of other agreements; providing oversight and ensuring compliance with employment law and labor management requirements; monitoring the Trust’s compliance with state and federal development and environmental permits; interacting with federal, state and local governmental agencies and public interest groups; and handling and supervising outside counsel concerning commercial leases, employment matters and various Article 78, commercial and tort litigation involving the Trust.

Responsibilities/Duties:

The General Counsel reports to the President & CEO and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

Advisory and Litigation Services

- Serving as the Trust's lead attorney, developing positions and strategies regarding government regulations, procurement, public contracts, environmental and land use issues, commercial and construction agreements, employment and labor concerns, torts, maritime/admiralty questions, construction law, and litigation;
- Participating in all major business transactions including real estate development of certain pier properties, sponsorship agreements, and outdoor events;
- Advising executive staff on legal aspects of the Trust's financing including assessing and advising on current and future banking, investment, and agency funding agreements;
- Counseling Trust staff on legal questions, troubleshooting problems, drafting and reviewing contracts and other legal documents, addressing litigation issues, and responding to other matters in a variety of legal practice areas;
- Evaluating the merits of court cases filed against or on behalf of the Trust, working with the appropriate manager(s) to define strategic defenses and approving settlements of disputes where warranted; and
- Under the leadership of the President/CEO, serving as a key member of the Trust's executive staff team helping to develop ideas, policies and solutions to a wide range of issues.

Corporate Governance

- Developing the Trust's internal policies and controls, procedures and programs with respect to corporate governance and ensuring that staff and Board members are properly trained in such matters;
- Acting as Secretary of the Corporation responsible for preparing Board of Directors meeting agendas, minutes, President's report and corporate resolutions; and
- Assuming ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Trust conducts its business in compliance with applicable Federal and New York State laws and regulations.

Staff and Outside Attorney Management

- Managing the Trust's internal legal function and staff which includes a Deputy General Counsel, a Senior Attorney, a Paralegal and a Contracts, Records and Insurance Manager, creating and administering an annual budget for the Department and administrative systems; and
- Selecting, retaining, and managing all outside counsel.

Policy Development and Review

- Working with Trust senior management to reduce liability through adopting policies that protect the Trust from undue legal exposure; and
- Being the point of contact with the Governor's counsel, NYS Attorney General and NYC Corporation Counsel offices; receiving and reviewing all executive orders and new government rules and regulations for implementation.

Required Education and Experience:

- J.D. and New York Admittance, with a minimum of ten years of experience;
- Experience leading the legal department of a not-for-profit or public sector organization in the New York City metropolitan area is preferred;
- Familiarity with New York State and/or City governmental procedures and requirements;
- Prior experience with commercial real estate and/or construction related transactional and litigation matters;
- Prior experience working effectively on a high volume and range of matters with a chief executive officer and senior management;
- Excellent writing ability, including legal drafting, preparation of reports and memoranda, and Board/intergovernmental communications;
- Outstanding work ethic and the ability to propose and implement organizational policy priority changes;
- Strong organizational skills with ability to act decisively and meet deadlines in a rapidly evolving, and regulated environment; and
- Ability to conduct legal research.

Essential Traits

- Strong and Decisive Leadership
- Effective Advocacy
- Problem Solving/Analysis
- Thorough/Detailed
- Fiscally responsible
- Collaboration/Congeniality
- Ability to be flexible including adjusting to changing priorities and circumstances

Compensation/Benefits:

Competitive salary of \$140,000 - \$155,000, depending upon experience. Excellent benefits package including: paid holidays, vacation time, sick and personal time, medical, dental and vision insurance, and participation in New York State Pension System.

Application Process:

Interested applicants are to submit a cover letter & resume to Kate Yarhouse, Director of Human Resources at resumes@hrpt.ny.gov. **Indicate Job Code: HRPT-2017GC in the subject line of the email.** No phone calls please.

More information on the Hudson River Park is available at:

www.hudsonriverpark.org

The Hudson River Park Trust is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Pursuant to Executive Order 161, no State entity, as defined by the Executive Order, is permitted to ask, or mandate, in any form, that an applicant for employment provide his or her current compensation, or any prior compensation history, until such time as the applicant is extended a conditional offer of employment with compensation. If such information has been requested from you before such time, please contact the Governor's Office of Employee Relations at (518) 474-6988 or via email at info@goer.ny.gov.