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Who is Jerry Hanson?

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The licensed engineer, architect and surveyor has spent 20 years in the private sector before taking public agency jobs in 1990. However, what he did during that time is still unclear.

The Desert Sun has previously requested Hanson's resume. But Desert Hot Springs officials say the city does not have one on record for the man who has been at the helm since 2003.

Hanson has not responded to The Desert Sun's requests for interviews since early June.

Hanson, a 58-year-old father of two grown children, has a bachelor's degree in engineering, a master's degree in business administration and a law degree.

According to the city Web site, Hanson worked as a "corporate executive" for development, finance, construction and professional finance firms. But in 1990, he became a manager in the public sector.

Public records show he lived in Montana before moving to California.

Hanson was hired as Desert Hot Springs' city public works director in late 2001. He was promoted to city manager in 2003.

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Supporters point to these successes

Since becoming city manager in 2003, Hanson has been credited with spearheading several positive changes inside Desert Hot Springs City Hall. Supporters say he has:

- Created an agreement to issue more than \$12 million in bonds to pull the city out of a nearly \$11million debt.
- Benefited the city with his engineering and architectural expertise and his law degree. They have enabled him to better review and negotiate development on behalf of the city.
- Located grants and other money sources to repair roads and sewers throughout the city.
- Filled longstanding vacancies inside City Hall. The city has budgeted 111.5 positions in the coming year.
- Hired less-costly legal representation and cut other costs.

Hanson on his compensation

"I don't come from a family of wealth, but I've done a lot to get where I am. If those persons feel their tax dollars are being spent irresponsibly, they should take it up at the ballots and vote (in new people)." **In a June 8 interview with The Desert Sun**

What about other city managers?

Typically, the crème de la crème of total compensation packages are found in larger cities like Los Angeles, San Jose and Oakland, said Barry Newton, the administrator of the California Public Agencies Compensation Survey. That is a compensation survey database used by cities like Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage to compare employees' compensations and benefits.

"There's direct correlation between the size of the city and the base salary rate and also the total compensation packages," Newton said from his Anaheim office. "Larger cities have larger staff, larger budgets and a greater ability to pay."

City managers in the Coachella Valley have a base salary of roughly \$120,000 to \$240,000. Coachella City Manager Jerry Santillan, for example, has a base salary of \$130,000 while La Quinta City Manager Thomas Genovese's is \$153,677. Indio's new city manager, Glenn Southard, was just hired at a base salary \$240,000.

Newton said Hanson's base salary amount of \$125,000 was very reasonable, but he could not comment on Hanson's additional benefits because he has not seen the paperwork documenting the cost.
