



**Application for Mayor of Missoula**

\*PLEASE NOTE: ALL APPLICATIONS ARE ATTACHED TO THE COUNCIL AGENDA AND ARE PUBLISHED ON THE CITY WEBSITE.

**Applications are due August 26, 2022 by 12:00 PM**

Please submit your completed application and attachments (resume, etc.) via email: [cityclerk@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.missoula.mt.us), or deliver it in person to the security desk at City Hall, addressed to:

Martha L. Rehbein, CMC, Legislative Services Director/City Clerk  
 City Clerk Office  
 435 Ryman  
 Missoula, MT 59802

The City Clerk office will confirm receipt of applications. Applicants are welcome to contact the City Clerk's office to verify receipt of application: 406-552-6078.

\*Late applications will NOT be accepted.

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION	
1.1 Name: <b>Sam Kulla</b>	1.2 Email: <b>sam.kulla@gmail.com</b>
1.3 Daytime Phone: <b>4065313559</b>	1.4 Alternate phone: <b>n/a</b>
1.5 Street Address: 907 Kern St Missoula MT 59801	1.6 Mailing address (if different than street address): PO BOX 8932 MISSOULA MT 59807-8932
1.7 What ward do you live in? <b>3</b>	1.8 How long immediately prior to today's date have you been a resident of the City of Missoula?  <b>30+ years</b>
1.9 What is your current occupation? <b>Education</b>	1.10 Where are you currently employed? <b>Aquinas International Academy</b>

## 2. QUALIFICATIONS

2.1 Are you 21 years of age or older? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	2.2 Are you a qualified elector registered to vote in Missoula County? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Have you been a resident for at least 2 years preceding the appointment to office of the City of Missoula or an area that has been annexed by the city? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	2.4 Have you resided in the State of Montana for at least 3 years? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

## 3. QUESTIONS

3.1 Serving as Mayor requires a full time commitment including presiding at Monday night Council meetings and other periodic morning, evening, and weekend appearances. Would you be able to fulfill these obligations? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 State your current and previous organizational affiliations, including political organizations. I acknowledge that our city is built on land previously stewarded and inhabited by the Salish, Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, Blackfeet, Shoshone, and probably more tribes. No party affiliation; not an active member of any political group. Previously a member of various trade-skills certifying organizations (NREMT, SPRAT, etc); University of Montana Alum; Adventure Scientists Volunteer; Current DHS/USCG Licensed Merchant Mariner.
3.3 State your relevant activities in the community which would prove useful to serving as Mayor. Close social ties to a diverse network of long-time community members. Worked as a substitute teacher for MCPS for many years until I earned my MA in Education. Ran grassroots write-in campaign for Mayor in previous election, with notable community support. Father and active member of broad-reaching parenting, childcare, and education communities. Home-renter who works multiple jobs to support a family in a dynamic socioeconomic time. Missoulian since age six, with deep appreciation of the city's history and a sincere interest in its future.
3.4 State your relevant work and lived experience which would prove useful to serving as Mayor. In addition to my lived experiences as an educator, father, and renter in the city, I have worked in multiple high-stress professional environments where the interests of various stakeholders need to be balanced and respected. I'm also familiar with community non-profit grant writing, fulfillment, and reporting on the municipal, county, and state levels, having worked for multiple 501(c)(3) organizations dealing with civic engagement, humanities, and environmental issues.
3.5 State your educational background, listing institutions, degrees, certificates, areas of study, and dates received. Paxson Elementary School Washington Middle School Hellgate High School, Diploma, Class of 2001 University of Montana, BA, Double Major in Spanish and Geography, 2005 University of Montana, MA, Education, 2020

3.6 Why do you want to serve as Mayor?

My interest in serving as Mayor arose from repeated suggestions and urgings to do so by multiple community members. Having witnessed the changes and general arc of the previous mayor's proud tenure, I see our city poised for a bright, prosperous and inclusive future, but only if care is taken to maintain the trust and engagement of the entire community. My rapport with people from various walks of life qualifies me to speak, act and lead on their behalf from a compassionate and personal point of view.

3.7 What is your understanding of the Mayor's general role in leading Missoula?

In addition to running the city council meetings and presiding over official city events and ceremonies, the Mayor's general role is to provide subtle and responsive guidance to critical development issues over a long time horizon. The Mayor must also maintain awareness of the city's ongoing liabilities and responsibilities to preexisting obligations in a manner that balances these with future needs of community members. The Mayor is the representative of the city throughout the county, state, and nation, and person who is ultimately responsible for its long and short term wellbeing and success.

3.8 What is your understanding of the Mayor's legal responsibilities and obligations in leading Missoula?

The Mayor must take and administer oaths, and perform all duties prescribed by the law or by resolution or ordinance of the council. As a presiding officer at city council meetings, the Mayor holds no veto power and does not get a vote except in cases of ties. The Mayor puts their signature on all council journals as well as treasury warrants, and is personally responsible for the veracity, accuracy, and integrity of all such matters. The Mayor must also maintain communication with the council any recommendations dealing with issues of health, cleanliness, ornament, and finance, bids at certain real estate sales, and may call special meetings of the council.

3.9 What is your understanding of the Mayor's cultural and social leadership role in leading Missoula?

In addition to being the face of city politics, the Mayor serves community members as a liaison between their needs and the bureaucracy, attempting to give voice and power to critical social and economic issues. The Mayor maintains a rapport with local businesses and community interest groups to accommodate engagement, participation, and mutual trust as development and growth ensue. The Mayor sets the tone of social discourse as much as possible, with positive intent to foster dialogues of respect and mutual cooperation between competing interests. The Mayor serves as an advocate of the people who live here and seeks long term solutions that prioritize their success, health and happiness.

3.10 Describe your leadership philosophy and style to lead during a crisis.

In times of crisis, it's important to maintain a calm and optimistic demeanor, and make swift moves to ensure immediate measures are taken in the interest of the health and safety of Missoulians and their environment. Teamwork and cooperation must be encouraged throughout the community to provide meaningful opportunities for people to come together and undertake whatever labor is required in the short term while hazard and risk assessments lay the groundwork for long-term mitigation of future events. Leaders in a crisis must inspire people to work together and focus on common goals.

3.11 Explain the taxation structure for local government, listing all main revenue sources and the law that applies to each, and discuss opportunities and limitations on those revenue sources.

Local government uses funds generated from local property taxes, as well as from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and multiple state and federal grants for restricted use applications. Examples of such use applications include housing, transportation, law enforcement, public safety, urban renewal, storm water, business improvement, and more. Money allocated for certain types of activity is not interchangeable or usable for other types of activities, and the city budgeting process is a major recurring activity the Mayor and City Council must collaborate on to maintain healthy city finances.

3.12 What are the most pressing issues Missoula will face in the next few years? List a total of five, explain why they are of importance, and rank them in order of importance (1 being most important). How would you address these issues?

1. HOUSING - Between rental and real estate prices, short term rentals, and rapid growth, housing is absolute a top priority. Measures must be taken to make sure there are affordable and high quality places for everybody to live, while still allowing property owners to take advantage of their assets through novel technologies. I would focus on continued affordable housing development as well as system design and development to take the business of short-term rental management into the public hands, with incentives for long-term leases and development projects that prioritize long-term livability.
2. TAXES - Missoula is known throughout Western Montana for its high taxes. While growth and the need for more money are inevitable, alternative revenue streams need to be explored that allow the city to meet future needs without overburdening taxpayers. From city-run businesses, special use fees for non-local interests, and even the potential of the licensing of new technologies developed by local teams to other city and local governments, there are multiple options to bring money in while giving residents a break at tax time.
3. CULTURE - In a time of social media and culture wars, city culture needs to be strong enough to supersede and overpower the forces of division that empower and enrich remote interests. Being a Missoulian needs to be a feeling strong enough to bring people together despite their differences to make this place into a city people are proud to call home, where they won't hesitate to cooperate on immediate community issues.
4. GROWTH - An inevitable, unrestricted growth threatens the quality of life and the health of community members, as well as their environment. Growth needs to be focused on creating a sustainable, affordable and inclusive community environment where members are empowered to engage and participate in their city's future. Businesses need to thrive to provide jobs for people who live here, and housing costs must be kept reasonable to maintain a thriving population of working-class city residents who can do the hands-on work that needs to be done.
5. ENVIRONMENT - Maintenance of open space, clean air and clean water, and creating processes and practices that respect the changes required to address climate change must be implemented at every opportunity to ensure that the city remains habitable at all into the indefinite future.

3.13 Who are the leaders of the executive branch of City of Missoula government that report to the Mayor and how would you approach working with these leaders and their staff?

In addition to the City Attorney and the City Clerk, major departments include Animal Control, Cemeteries, Planning and Development, Environmental Health, Financial Services, Fire and Police departments, Health, Human Resources, the MRA, Parking Commission, Municipal Courts, Parks & Rec, and Public Works. I would have regular meetings with key department staff from each area, make it a practice to regularly spend time in each department to gain understanding of their processes and challenges, and generally attempt to foster relationships of trust and respect between departments, aiming for all departments to share a vision of our city's future.

#### 4. CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information contained in my application is true and correct in every respect and that I meet all the statutory qualifications to be appointed as the Mayor of the City of Missoula.

Sign Here

Date here (use the arrow to drop down calendar)

**Sam Kulla**

Digitally signed by Sam Kulla  
Date: 2022.08.26 09:23:20

8/26/22

-06'00'

**From:** [Marty Rehbein](#)  
**To:** [Sam Kulla](#); [City Clerk Inbound](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Mayor Application & Resume  
**Date:** Friday, August 26, 2022 9:37:00 AM

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Sam,

Thank you for your interest in serving as Mayor. This e-mail is confirmation that we've received your application.

**Marty Rehbein** | (She/Her)  
**Legislative Services Director/City Clerk**  
**City Clerk Office**  
406-552-6078 | [rehbeinm@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:rehbeinm@ci.missoula.mt.us)



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**From:** Sam Kulla <[sam.kulla@gmail.com](mailto:sam.kulla@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 26, 2022 9:36 AM  
**To:** City Clerk Inbound <[CityClerk@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:CityClerk@ci.missoula.mt.us)>  
**Subject:** Mayor Application & Resume

Dear Ms. Rehbein,

I hope this message finds you well. Attached you'll find my completed and signed Mayor application, as well as a recent resume. Please let me know if any additional materials are required. Thanks so much for your time.

Respectfully,  
Sam Kulla  
(406) 531-3559

**From:** [Sam Kulla](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk Inbound](#)  
**Subject:** Mayor Application & Resume  
**Date:** Friday, August 26, 2022 9:36:49 AM  
**Attachments:** [Sam Kulla - Resume.pdf](#)  
[Mayor-Application-Signed.pdf](#)

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Respectfully,

Sam Kulla

(406) 531-3559

TRUSTED LEADER, EDUCATOR AND COMMUNICATOR

# SAM KULLA

[SAM.KULLA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SAM.KULLA@GMAIL.COM) +1 (406) 531-3559 [LINKEDIN.COM/IN/SAMKULLA](https://www.linkedin.com/in/samkulla)

## TEACHER, AQUINAS INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY – 2020-PRESENT

Remote delivery of custom accredited curricular units for international secondary & university students, including Environmental Sciences, Literature, Econ, and Coding.

## PROGRAM COORDINATOR, AUSTRAL EDUCATION GROUP – 2017-PRESENT

International business education networking tours to top companies throughout Silicon Valley, San Francisco & Napa for elite global MBA / EMBA business schools.

## BAY PATROL DIRECTOR, CITIZENS FOR A HEALTHY BAY – 2017-2018

Non-profit environmental education, grant projects, and vessel operations for regional agencies, schools, and universities, throughout the South Salish Sea (aka Puget Sound).

## FIELD SUPERVISOR, ROPE PARTNER INC. – 2012-2017

Technical rope access projects on renewable wind energy turbines throughout the US, heavily focused on safety, with detailed technical communication & reporting.

## SUBSTITUTE TEACHER, MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – 2009-2017

Middle and high school teaching throughout the district, for days or weeks at a time, in all subjects, especially English, Spanish, Music and Science. Frequently requested.

## WEB DEVELOPER, FREELANCE– 2009-2012

Business development, marketing, web & print design, e-commerce, prototyping, copywriting, editing, coding, crowd funding, gallery events, and accounting.

## WILDERNESS MEDICAL INSTRUCTOR, AERIE BACKCOUNTRY MEDICINE – 2006-2011

Scenario-based wilderness emergency medical classes with lectures and extended live-action incident simulations, in remote areas nationwide, for public & private groups.

## WILDERNESS RAFT GUIDE, WHITEWATER VOYAGES – 2001-2019

Wild & scenic whitewater excursions for all ages in rugged environments, including talks on natural & cultural history, botany, geology, survival, and backcountry cooking.

## **DEGREES**

- Master of Arts, Education, University of Montana, 2020
- Bachelor of Arts, Geography & Spanish Literature, University of Montana, 2005

## **BADGES**

- International Baccalaureate (IB) Certified, University of Montana / IBO, 2020
- Merchant Mariner 50-Ton Master's License, United States Coast Guard, Exp. 2023
- Adventure Scientists Field Data Collection Volunteer, 2017-Present

**BONUS: SPEAKS, READS AND WRITES FLUENT SPANISH**