

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE**  
**Application for Charlottesville City Council Appointed Member**

**Applications must be received in the Office of the Clerk of Council no later than 5 p.m. on January 30, 2023**

**In accordance with City Charter Sec.-8, the City seeks qualified applicants for appointment to the Charlottesville City Council to fill the unexpired term of departing Councilor Magill. Pursuant to state and local law, qualified applicants must be a resident of the City of Charlottesville for at least thirty days prior to appointment to fill the vacant seat. All persons who are qualified voters of the City of Charlottesville shall be eligible for appointment to fill the unexpired term until December 31, 2023. The appointed council member shall, before entering upon the duties of their offices, take the oaths prescribed for all City Councilors under Virginia law and qualify before the Charlottesville Circuit Court.**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Full Name –** Kristin Layng Szakos

**Home Address –** [REDACTED] Charlottesville, VA 22901

**√ \*You must be registered to vote in the City of Charlottesville. You can determine this by checking your voter card or by calling the Voter Registration Office at 434-970-3250.**

**Cell Phone –** [REDACTED]

**Email –** [REDACTED]

**QUALIFICATIONS**

**1. How long have you resided in the City of Charlottesville?**

I've lived in Charlottesville for 29 years, since 1994, in the Locust Grove neighborhood.

**2. Have you ever been elected or appointed as an Officer or Commissioner for the City of Charlottesville? If so, please explain.**

I was an elected member of the Charlottesville City Council for two terms, from 2010-2017. I served as Vice-Mayor in 2012 and 13. I served on boards and commissions as a Council representative: PACC (Planning Action Coordination Council), Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail (including two years as chair), Metropolitan Planning Organization (one year as chair), CAT Advisory Board, Housing Advisory Committee, Social Services Advisory Board, City of Promise Advisory Board (Secretary), City Scholarship Board (Secretary), Disproportionate Minority Contact Task Force, Charlottesville Alliance for Black Male Achievement, City Audit Committee, and Charlottesville Refugee Dialogue. I also served as a Council representative to Virginia First Cities, where I served three years as chair.

**3. Please indicate why you are interested in serving on City Council:**

My main interest is in how I can be of service to the community. The next Council member will need to hit the ground running to be able to be effective during what is essentially a 10½-month term. As a former Council member, I am familiar with many of the processes and protocols required, and have been through some of the decision-making processes before, including hiring of a city manager and city attorney, updating zoning, and developing a city budget, which will be forefront in the coming year. I do not plan to run for Council following the 2023 term.

**4. Please indicate areas of your experience and knowledge that you see as important for consideration of your application for appointment:**

In addition to my experience as a City Council member, my background as a journalist, researcher, and policy writer has honed skills needed to thoroughly understand and consider complex policy matters before the city. I have helped to author papers for the National League of Cities around issues of racial justice, affordable housing, and federal funding, among other topics. I helped to write successful federal and national grant applications for Charlottesville city programs, including out-of-school-time meals, training in diversion of young offenders, technical support for black male achievement, and promise neighborhoods. My experience in both political and community organizing has helped me understand the importance of seeking out the perspectives of a wide range of constituents. As a long-time city resident, I am also well connected in many community venues and organizations, giving me access to a variety of perspectives.

I am passionate about issues of social and racial justice in our community, particularly around economic opportunity and housing. As the child of civil rights activists in Mississippi, I have been engaged in working toward an inclusive, diverse, and equitable society my whole life, and approach every issue through a lens of racial and social equity.

**5. Please list any relevant leadership skills or educational training:**

I participated in the Harvard Kennedy School's residential Women in Power Program in 2011. Fifty women from around the world were selected for this leadership development program, with particular emphasis on multi-party negotiation, persuasion and rhetoric, and collective decision-making.

I also participated in numerous workshops and training sessions for Virginia elected officials (Virginia Municipal League), City Council members (National League of Cities), and members of specific boards (MPO, Jail Board, HUD), and spent eight years learning about and researching best practices in city leadership.

One thing I should note is that I will be out of town in June and July for a long-planned family trip across the United States. If appointed, I would have to attend Council meetings during that time via Zoom. I will have access to the Internet and will otherwise be able to do the work of Council remotely while traveling.

**Indicate if you are attaching additional information pertinent to this application.**

**X Attachments are provided**

Resume

**Signature** .



**Date** January 21, 2023

Please be advised that upon submission, this application and supporting documents becomes a public record and may be published by the City of Charlottesville.

Return application to:

Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council

605 East Main Street

P.O. Box 911

Charlottesville, VA 22902

# Kristin Layng Szakos

██████████, Charlottesville, VA 22901 • ██████████

## SUMMARY

I was elected to the Charlottesville City Council in 2009, and served two four-year terms, including two years as Vice Mayor. I served as Co-Chair of the National League of Cities' Council on Youth, Education and Families, Co-Vice Chair of the NLC Public Safety Committee, and a member of the Race, Education, and Leadership Council. I served three years as Chair of Virginia First Cities, a coalition of historic urban cities, and was Chair of the Charlottesville Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Albemarle Charlottesville Regional Jail Authority Board, Secretary of the City of Promise and of the Charlottesville Community Scholarship Program Board, and a member of the Charlottesville Alliance for Black Male Achievement, Transit Advisory Committee, Housing Advisory Committee, City Audit Committee, and Community Refugee Council. I currently serve on the Board of the Albemarle Housing Improvement Program, the Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church, and the Development Committee of City of Promise, as well as the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia Task Force on Reparations.

I have worked as a journalist, freelance writer, editor, and grant writer for 40 years. An author of two books and former editor of a journal about community organizing in the Appalachian region, I have also worked for a variety of nonprofits. For eight years I was a regular proofreader of French-to-English translations of medical journals, websites, government documents, and research papers. Most recently, I have consulted as a writer and editor for several projects with the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families.

## EDUCATION

**Harvard Kennedy School**, Cambridge, MA – Women in Power Program, May 2011

**Northwestern University**, Medill School of Journalism, Evanston, IL, and Washington, DC – Master of Science in Journalism, 1983

**Grinnell College**, Grinnell, IA – Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies, 1981

**Continuing education and workshops** in community and government leadership, transportation planning, community development, affordable housing strategy, dismantling racism, campaign strategy, rhetoric and negotiation, community organizing, editing, layout and design, print management, French, Spanish, German, Hungarian, voter registration, economics, special education, foster parenting, banjo, piano, ukulele, voice and violin.

## WORK HISTORY

**2018-present:** Freelance writer, editor, consultant. Contract writer for the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families; factchecker and editor of BlackRock iShares financial reports with Spain Consulting; volunteer grants consultant and writer for local nonprofits. Political advisor to local candidates and elected officials.

**2010-2017:** Member, Charlottesville City Council; Vice Mayor 2014-15

**1993-2018:** Writer and editor, including various book chapters and articles on community organizing, writing and editing content for websites, book manuscript and thesis editing for

local authors, manuscript preparation for government publications, grantwriting for various nonprofits, including City of Promise, Charlottesville City Schools, the Virginia Consort, and Virginia Organizing. Since 2004: Freelance editor and proofreader of books, articles, technical documents, websites, government manuals, contracts, etc.

**March 2007-November 2008:** Obama campaign Volunteer Coordinator, full-time after April 2008. Co-coordinated ballot petition drive in Virginia's 5th Congressional District, built the local organization, supported and trained with campaign staff, produced weekly volunteer e-mail communications, oversaw office activities and more than 7,000 volunteers, coordinated constituent work for the local campaign. Coordinated first statewide Day of Service in 2009.

**August 2005-February 2008:** Grants Specialist with Children, Youth & Family Services, Charlottesville, VA, researching, writing and reporting on grant proposals to support a \$1+ million budget each year for social services programs for children

**Summer 2006 and 2007:** Presenter on community organizing and the media at the Summer Institute at Concordia College, Montréal, Canada

**2002-2003:** Synagogue Administrator, Congregation Beth Israel, Charlottesville, VA. Hired and supervised office staff, monitored budget, coordinated building use, staffed congregational committees, reported to the Rabbi and board

**1998-2001:** Grantwriter, Newsletter Editor, Camp Holiday Trails, Charlottesville, VA

**1995-1998:** Typist and Publications Coordinator, Crossroads Waldorf School, Crozet, VA

**1988-2000:** Editor and Publisher, *The Appalachian Reader*, a quarterly journal of community organizing in the 10-state Appalachian region

**1987-1992:** Director of Grant Preparation and Coordinator of Publications for Pikeville College, Pikeville, KY; co-author of the centennial history book of the college

**1984-1986:** Reporter, photographer, *The Appalachian News-Express*, Pikeville, KY

**1983:** Staff reporter, The Associated Press, Atlanta, GA

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- Co-author of **We Make Change: Community Organizers Talk About What They Do – and Why**, published April 2007 by Vanderbilt University Press
- Co-editor and contributor to **Lessons from the Field: Organizing in Rural Communities**, published December 2007 by the American Institute for Social Justice
- Editor and Publisher, ***The Appalachian Reader***, a quarterly journal of community organizing in the 10-state Appalachian region, 1988-2000

## **OTHER**

- Lived in Lyon, France, 7/2003-6/2004; lived in Budapest, Hungary, 7/1992-6/1993; traveled Europe by campervan 2/2018-8/2018
- Vestry member Trinity Episcopal Church, Charlottesville
- Member, Voter Registration coordinator, Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP, former Executive Board member
- Singer with Fire, Trinity Episcopal Church Choir, Martin Luther King Community Choir
- Parent and foster parent