

## **Ghida Neukirch Biography**

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Ghida Neukirch is a municipal leader and community advocate with more than 28 years of experience in local government management. She is the first female City Manager for the City of Highland Park, IL. As a first-generation proud American, having moved to the United States from Beirut, Lebanon in 1976, she is dedicated to promoting inclusivity and fairness for all. Neukirch has successfully built and retained experienced and diverse teams with the capacity to create improved culture and performance.

As City Manager for the City of Highland Park, IL, a progressive community located on the shore of Lake Michigan with nearly 30,000 residents, Neukirch directs the operations for the City. She is responsible for the management of a \$90 MM budget and nearly 280 employees. Neukirch has balanced 9 consecutive budgets and has ensured that the City maintains a Aaa bond rating, the highest bond rating available and a testament to sound financial planning and management. In addition, she is responsible for the implementation of the one of the nation's only local assault weapons bans, oversaw the reconstruction of the City's \$35 MM water plant, and negotiated and coordinated the consolidation of fire and emergency medical services between the City of Highland Park and Highwood.

Neukirch serves on a broad range of professional, civic, and philanthropic boards and committees. She is a Board Member of the Illinois Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board, Board Member and Past-President of the Rotary Club of Highland Park/Highwood, and a founder and Executive Board Member of Community the Anti-Drug (CTAD). She serves on the Board of the Northwest Municipal Conference and is past-Treasurer of the organization. Neukirch is also the Co-Founder of the Highland Park Career Exploration Program (HPCE). She is a Credentialed Manager by the International City/County Management Association and is a Past President of the Illinois City/County Management Association. Neukirch is also the recipient of the Outstanding Manager Award by the Illinois City/County Management Association.

In 2012, Neukirch began her employment with the City of Highland Park as the Deputy City Manager and was promoted to City Manager in 2014. Her prior professional work includes management positions at four other municipalities in the State of Illinois. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Psychology from DePaul University and a Masters of Public Administration with an emphasis in Urban Management from Northern Illinois University. She and her husband Scot Neukirch, have two children, Jaclyn & Zachary.