

TO: Board of Estimates

FROM: Mike Lipski, Human Resources

DATE: March 4, 2015

SUBJECT: Assistant Parks Superintendent

In 2011, the Parks Superintendent, Kevin Briski, requested creation of an Assistant Parks Superintendent. At that time, it was designed that the Assistant Parks Superintendent, while functioning as an assistant to the Superintendent, would still perform the work of one of the large functional areas within Parks (Operations, Finance/Administration, Planning, Community Services, etc.) The position was posted internally and the selected candidate would retain responsibility over their area. Eric Knepp was selected to become the Assistant and continued to perform work over Finance and Administration for the Division.

In 2014, Mr. Briski resigned and Mr. Knepp was promoted to Parks Superintendent in September. At that time, Mr. Knepp determined that the Assistant Superintendent should be posted and filled. However, after having served as Assistant Superintendent for almost 3 years, his vision for the position differed slightly. Instead of the selected candidate retaining responsibility over a particular functional area within Parks, Mr. Knepp determined that the different units within Parks should be split up between the Superintendent and the Assistant. The Superintendent would retain authority over the Parks Foundation, Public Information, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, and the Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant would have authority over Operations, Planning/Development, Finance/Administration, and Community Services. Both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent would be responsible for handling various committees and commissions, as well as communication with Alders. This position was posted for internal competition and interviews were held in early February. Following the interviews, Mr. Knepp received feedback from the interview panel regarding the candidates and the structure. Since that time, and now having served in the Superintendent role for 6 months, Mr. Knepp has determined that the existing structure of having a Superintendent and 1 Assistant Superintendent is not the best structure for the organization. Rather, Mr. Knepp is requesting that a second position of Assistant Parks Superintendent be created to assist with the management of the Parks Division. Both positions would again be posted for internal competition and one of the underlying positions would be held vacant and used to fund the Assistant Parks Superintendent for the remainder of 2015.

Since 2011, when the Assistant Superintendent was created, the Parks Division has undergone some significant changes. First, the Parks Foundation has taken on a larger role for the Division with the creation of the Parks Foundation Coordinator position. The Superintendent has been supervising the Coordinator while the Foundation works to set up its own organizational structure. While the Coordinator is slated to become directly employed by the Foundation within the next year or two, the coordination between the Foundation and Parks Division will continue to be significant. Second, starting in 2013, Parks took on full operation of the golf program. This did not only affect operations, but also finance as Parks is now responsible for the budgeting, purchasing, and increased human resources management for the enterprise fund. These changes,

as well as other new special events and programs, such as Parks Meet and Eat, B-Cycle management, expanded Aquatics programming, and Ride the Drive, continue to stretch the resources of the Parks Division. Additionally, the Parks Division is actively involved in the management of community events, which have grown in complexity over the past five years.

In order to better meet these challenges, Mr. Knepp recommends creation of the second Assistant Parks Superintendent position, and I agree with this recommendation. The new structure would have the Superintendent continue to supervise the Parks Foundation Coordinator, and then directly supervise the 2 Assistant Superintendents. The remaining units within Parks would be divided among the 2 Assistant Superintendents. Initially, one would supervise Planning/Development, Finance/Administration, and public information/outreach, and the other would be responsible for operations, facilities, and services. Because both positions would be at the same level, these units could be moved around to allow for more exposure to the different areas of Parks for the incumbents.

In the current structure, the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent spend so much of their time supervising their respective units that higher-level work can get neglected and a deeper understanding of each unit is difficult. However, this proposed structure allows for cross training of the Assistants and will free up the Superintendent to focus on the higher-level tasks associated with the Division while ensuring that the functional areas continue to run smoothly. Also, this allows each Assistant Superintendent the opportunity to learn each unit more deeply. The proposed structure is not inconsistent with others found in the City. In fact, Information Technology, Monona Terrace, Finance, Human Resources, and Traffic Engineering/Parking have similar structures.

Because Parks is seeking to add a position within an existing classification, this is appropriately routed directly to the Board of Estimates for approval pursuant to APM 2-4. We have prepared the necessary Resolution to implement this recommendation.

Editor’s Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2015 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2015 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2015 Annual Maximum +12% longevity
18/16	\$80,790	\$97,361	\$109,044

cc: Eric Knepp—Parks Superintendent