

TO: Personnel Board

FROM: Emaan Abdel-Halim, Human Resources

DATE: 3 November 2014

SUBJECT: Administrative Clerk I (K. Thompson) – Forest Hill Cemetery, Parks Division

At the request of Parks Superintendent Eric Knepp, I conducted a position study of a 50% FTE Administrative Clerk I (#1487; CG20-09) at the Forest Hill Cemetery, currently occupied by Ms. Karen Thompson. This request for the position to be reclassified is due to the retirement of the Cemetery Manager in January 2014 and the recent restructuring of the Parks General Supervisor (West and Central Parks) positions. Based on conversations with Ms. Laura Bauer, Parks General Supervisor – West, and the incumbent and upon reviewing the position description, I recommend reclassifying Ms. Thompson to an 80% FTE Program Assistant I in CG20-11.

A review of the class specification for Administrative Clerk I (see attached) shows:

... **responsible administrative support work** in the implementation and coordination of a **specified office function necessitating judgment, discretion, and initiative in the interpretation and application of program policies, procedures and processes.** Work at this level is characterized by **ongoing responsibility for an assigned program support activity.** ... Work is normally performed under the general supervision of a professional or administrative supervisor. ... [emphasis added]

A review of the class specification for Program Assistant I (see attached) shows:

...**responsible administrative support and advanced-level secretarial and/or programmatic work** in a City department, division or other independent program unit. Employees in this class perform a **wide variety of administrative, secretarial, and program support functions** ... **programmatic recordkeeping and reporting; performance and/or coordination of specialized program functions;** and/or direct involvement in budget development and monitoring. The work requires **exercising considerable judgment and discretion in the interpretation and application of policies and the development of operating systems and procedures.** ... [emphasis added]

Ms. Thompson began working for the City of Madison in 1996, and held various administrative positions in different agencies. She began working in the Parks Division in late 2007 when she competed for the Administrative Clerk I position at the Forest Hill Cemetery. Under the direction of the Cemetery Manager, Ms. Thompson has been responsible for all cemetery plot purchase agreements, explaining the rules and regulations of burials, preparing charges and collecting payments, scheduling burials and marker installations including coordination with funeral homes and monument dealers, managing the entire cemetery's paperwork including contract deeds, lots cards, and quit claim deeds for the resale of unused burial plots. All burial records are also tracked through the cemetery's computer software system, which is also maintained by Ms. Thompson. Additionally, she is the primary liaison for veteran burials and provides the required special documentation and verifies service records for Veteran's Affairs.

In January 2014, with the retirement of the Cemetery Manager, Ms. Thompson took on more administrative and customer service responsibilities as the managerial duties were split between herself and the Cemetery Operations Leadworker, which took on the more field related duties. The additional duties include corresponding and coordinating with specialty services for mausoleum engraving, advising on rate increases for plot rates and service fees, answering more specific customer inquiries, serving as the onsite funeral escort and burial assistant, accommodating special burial traditions, and serving in an on-call capacity two weekends a month. When on-call Ms. Thompson may be required to response to any emergency calls and coordinate staff as needed for immediate (or fast track) burials. During her on-call weekends, she also serves as the funeral escort and burial assistant for any services scheduled.

The classification specification states the work of a Program Assistant I is advanced level programmatic work with a wide variety of administrative duties. These positions also require considerable judgment in interpreting and applying the policies of the program. Ms. Thompson has operated at a high level of independence and manages a wide variety of administrative functions very specific to the cemetery operations. Additionally, since the retirement of the Cemetery Manager earlier this year, she has stepped into higher level roles as needed to maintain consistency of service for the cemetery’s customers.

The Parks Division recently restructured the City’s parks into three areas – East, West and Central. With this new structure, the Cemetery Manager position was recreated as a Parks General Supervisor overseeing the west section of the City’s parks including the Forest Hill Cemetery. This Parks General Supervisor, Ms. Laura Bauer now acts as the manager for the cemetery and directly supervises its staff. However, the additional administrative responsibilities detailed above remain with this position. This change in the Parks organizational structure and with the inclusion of the Cemetery Manager’s administrative duties, Ms. Thompson’s position has even more programmatic responsibility and therefore should be reclassified as a Program Assistant I.

Therefore, I am recommending reclassification of the Administrative Clerk I position at the Forest Hill Cemetery to a Program Assistant I position within the Parks budget, and reallocating the incumbent, Ms. Karen Thompson, to the new position. In addition, because of the additional work, Ms. Thompson, while only budgeted at a 0.5 FTE has been working closer to 80% of a regular work week. As this work is to continue in the future, it is appropriate to up the FTE of the position to 0.8. The necessary resolutions to implement these recommendations have been drafted.

Editor’s Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2014 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2014 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2014 Annual Maximum +12% longevity
20/09	\$40,187	\$45,185	\$50,154
20/11	\$42,635	\$47,724	\$53,456

- cc: Eric Knepp – Parks Superintendent
 Charlie Romines – Parks Operations Manager
 Laura Bauer – Parks General Supervisor (West)
 Karen Thompson – Incumbent
 Greg Gotzion – Parks Union Steward
 Greg Leifer – Labor Relations Manager