

CITY OF MADISON  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL**  
CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: October 9, 2007

TO: Personnel Board

FROM: Larry Oaks, Human Resources

SUBJECT: **Water Utility Public Information Officer**

The Water Utility has identified a pressing need to establish a multi-faceted public information program, to be staffed by a new full-time position. This position will perform professional communications and public relations work in planning, coordinating and implementing a comprehensive communications and water conservation program for the Madison Water Utility. The work involves developing and implementing publicity, public relations, public information and internal communications materials and activities for the Water Utility within a strategic context. This work involves considerable judgment and discretion in identifying, recommending, and implementing public and internal information campaigns. Under the general supervision of the General Manager, the position will serve on the Utility's management team and play a key leadership role in supporting the Utility's mission, goals and objectives through a strategic communications program.

Since no descriptive class currently exists, I propose the creation of the new class of "Water Utility Public Information Officer" (class specification attached).

I recommend that the class of "Water Utility Public Information Officer" be placed in Compensation Group 18, Range 08, consistent with other comparable public information officers (e.g., Police Public Information Officer and Public Health Public Information Officer).

This new position will be funded through the deletion of the vacant position (#1869) of "Water Utility Financial Manager" in Compensation Group 18, Range 15 in the permanent salary detail of the Water Utility budget.

I have prepared the necessary ordinance and resolution to implement this recommendation. The vacant position will be filled competitively.

Attachment

cc: Larry Nelson, City Engineer

| Compensation Group/Range | 2007 Annual Minimum (Step 1) | 2007 Annual Maximum (Step 5) | 2007 Annual Maximum (w/Longevity) |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 18/08                    | 49,306                       | 58,509                       | 65,520                            |
| 18/15                    | 67,395                       | 81,146                       | 90,896                            |

# WATER UTILITY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

## CLASS DESCRIPTION

### General Responsibilities:

This is professional communications and public relations work in planning, coordinating, and implementing a comprehensive communications and water conservation program for the Madison Water Utility. The work involves developing and implementing publicity, public relations, public information and internal communications materials and activities for the Water Utility within a strategic context. Work involves considerable judgment and discretion in identifying, recommending, and implementing public and internal information campaigns. Under the general supervision of the General Manager, the position serves on the Utility's management team and plays a key leadership role in supporting the Utility's mission, goals and objectives through a strategic communications program.

### Examples of Duties and Responsibilities:

Plan, develop, implement and maintain the communication and information programs for the Water Utility incorporating both general and special information/communication needs.

Through research, conferences, site visits and other sources, determine elements available and appropriate for a comprehensive water conservation program for Madison. Develop a comprehensive conservation program plan for presentation to and adoption by the General Manager, Mayor and Board of Water Commissioners.

Manage, administer and coordinate the adopted conservation program.

Prepare, develop and disseminate public information regarding the adopted conservation program, including print and audiovisual materials for publication/presentation on the Utility website, news releases, public service announcements, utility reports, bill stuffers, newsletters, brochures, and presentations to civic groups, school classes, neighborhood groups and at community events and other information outlets as appropriate.

Coordinate with and participate in other City and community conservation and sustainability efforts such as the Natural Step, Green Cities, ENACT, Sustain Dane Rain Barrel Project, etc.

Continually monitor and evaluate conservation program opportunities through professional organizations, governmental agencies and local environmental/conservation groups, apply for appropriate grant funding, and recommend additions and updates to the adopted conservation program.

Develop ongoing media relationships and serve as liaison and primary contact for media and other external agencies in public information/education matters. Set up media on-call system. Conduct and/or coordinate media training and crisis communications training sessions for staff likely to respond to the electronic and print media inquiries. Develop information

messages and speaking points and prepare and distribute news releases, information packages and public service announcements to media, external agencies and the public.

Compile, coordinate, edit, prepare, develop, distribute and maintain print and published information for the Utility including, but not limited to, information on the Utility website, a web-based Utility annual report, the annual drinking water quality report, bill stuffers, customer newsletters, brochures, bulletins, listserv information and other information outlets as appropriate, both directly and through subordinates. Review and evaluate Utility publications for quality and effectiveness of communication of drinking water information. Ensure translation and foreign language availability of Utility publications and other communications consistent with City policy and procedures. Coordinate and develop utility-related school curricula.

Compile, coordinate, edit, prepare, develop, distribute and maintain audio/visual information for the Utility including, but not limited to, public service announcements, advertisements, PowerPoint presentations, and audio/video productions for internal and external use both directly and through subordinates. Review and evaluate Utility audio/visual productions for quality and effectiveness of communication of drinking water information (including water conservation).

Coordinate, schedule, contract for and/or purchase air time for audio/video productions; solicit, coordinate, schedule and assign community speaking engagements and presentations to clubs, organizations, civics groups and school classes; plan, coordinate and execute community events and participation in events, conferences and expositions; meet with and support community groups in facilitating information and actions they desire from the Utility.

Track, manage, coordinate and ensure proper and timely response to general outside request and inquiries of the Utility, including letters, emails and web-based communications. Respond, draft response or forward inquiries to proper staff for response and track responses until issues are resolved. Coordinate proper response to all Open Records requests, including maintaining records and schedules for Open Records requests and serve as the Open Records coordinator for the Utility.

Plan, coordinate, schedule, prepare, contract for and distribute Utility customer feedback surveys and compile, analyze and distribute results. Assemble and coordinate customer, consumer or community focus groups to provide input and recommendations for the Utility's community outreach and communications activities. Respond or coordinate response to surveys/inquiries from water organizations, governmental agencies and other water utilities.

Participate in emergency response training and activities of the Utility and maintenance of the Utility's emergency response plan. Identify the need for and develop risk assessment and public information messages for bioterrorism, natural disaster, public health emergencies or other drinking water issues in conjunction with appropriate staff. Participate in related state and county-wide emergency exercises.

Coordinate the development, adoption, maintenance and tracking of appropriate benchmarks for the Utility to measure progress toward approved goals and objectives and provide reports on a variety of Utility activities and benchmarks.

Perform related work as required.

## QUALIFICATIONS

### Knowledges, Skills and Abilities:

Thorough knowledge of applicable promotional, public relations, and communication theories, techniques, and practices. Working knowledge of print and broadcast media. Knowledge of related computer applications. Ability to develop, recommend and promote professional public information materials in a strategic context. Ability to communicate effectively both in writing and orally. Ability to cultivate and maintain effective relations with the media. Ability to provide leadership as a member of the management team. Ability to produce and promote public information/education events, write accurate news releases and public service announcements and to review and edit the related work of others. Ability to compile promotional information about drinking water and water conservation. Ability to organize activities, establish priorities, and meet deadlines. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships. Ability to maintain adequate attendance.

### Training and Experience:

Three years of responsible professional multimedia public/community relations experience in the research, development, and delivery of a technical (e.g., health, safety, environmental) communications program. Such experience would normally be gained after graduation from an accredited college or university with a major in communications, public/community relations, or similar field. Other combinations of training and/or experience with can be demonstrated to result in the possession of the knowledges, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the duties of these positions will also be considered.

### Necessary Special Qualifications:

Possession of a valid driver's license or the ability to meet the transportation requirements of this position.

| <b>Department/Division</b> | <b>Comp. Group</b> | <b>Range</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Water Utility              | 18                 | 08           |

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brad Wirtz  
Human Resources Director

\_\_\_\_\_ Date