

To: Personnel Board
From: Victoria Larson, Human Resources
Date: June 8, 2020
Subject: Landscape Architect 4

At the request of Parks Superintendent Eric Knepp, and Parks Planning and Development Manager, Ann Freiwald, I have studied the position of Landscape Architect 3 (CG 18 , Range 10, Position # 4299), currently occupied by Sarah Lerner. This position leads major park development projects and the development and implementation of Parks capital improvement budgets. Based on my review of the current position description and the classification specifications for Landscape Architect 3 and Landscape Architect 4, as well as discussions with A. Freiwald and the incumbent, I conclude that the current position of Landscape Architect 3 should be recreated as an Landscape Architect 4 in CG 18, Range 12 and that S. Lerner should be reallocated to the new position.

The classification of Landscape Architect 3 is defined as:

....Perform all work of a Landscape Architect 2 with the application of broader professional expertise and independent responsibility for the completion and management of major project components incorporating the development and implementation of Parks capital improvement budgets. Prepare and/or coordinate the preparation of designs, plans and specifications for a wide variety of City public works construction projects. Provide leadership and guidance to subordinates as may be required.

The classification of Landscape Architect 4 is defined as:

....Perform all work of Landscape Architect 3 with increased professional expertise, independent responsibility for the completion of major projects, and emphasis on project leadership and management. Determine the nature and scope of an assigned project and decide what aspects of the work will be assigned to consultants, contractors, and lower level staff. Plan and schedule all aspects of the project and review status regularly with staff. Provide training to lower level staff. Sign off plans and specifications. Attend public hearings and informational meetings with staff or independently. Deal with more complex professional landscape architectural issues and provide advice and assistance to lower level staff relative to public presentations. Participate in the prioritization of projects and the preparation of estimates for the Capital Budget process .Coordinate projects with consulting engineers; private/public utilities; state, county and other governmental units; and other individuals and entities. Supervise the preparation of special evaluations and fiscal report

S. Lerner began working at the Parks Department in 2010, and was hired to assist with the Parks Open Space Plan and the Capitol City's Comprehensive Parks Plan. In 2012, S. Lerner became a registered professional Landscape Architect in the State of Wisconsin and was promoted to a Landscape Architect 2. Over time, S. Lerner was able to work on projects independently, and took on larger, more complex projects. This resulted in S. Lerner being promoted to a Landscape Architect 3 in 2016. Since 2016, she has taken on more complex tasks related to development review and capital improvement budgets. S. Lerner specifically takes the lead on these projects by assigning work to consultants, managing development review and impact fee collection, attending public hearings, facilitating public information meetings, creating additional public engagement strategies, and by training other staff as needed.

During this ten-year timeframe, the work of the Parks Planning division began to dramatically change. The City’s Engineering unit initially collected Park Impact Fees. This changed in 2018 when the previous Park Planning Development Manager took over that responsibility, and it ultimately became Sarah’s responsibility. This responsibility has remained Sarah’s after a new manager was hired to help accommodate the increasing workload. Park’s planning processes also became more complex. They now involve a number of consultants, the management of millions of dollars, require a more robust public engagement strategy, and equity planning. S. Lerner takes the lead in this area and specifically facilitated the largest Parks public engagement effort when completing the James Madison Master Parks Plan in 2019. Finally, data analysis and collection has become more complex. S. Lerner manages Parks GIS data, has supervised interns who assist with this data, managed a system conversion in 2019, and uses this data to and develop Park’s Master Plan.

Both the Parks Superintendent and Parks Planning and Development Manager have indicated that S. Lerner has provided leadership by assisting and training other Landscape Architects and supervising interns. There is currently one other Landscape Architect 4 in the Parks Planning unit who takes the lead on what is built in the Parks. S. Lerner completes a similar level of tasks through leadership by determining what should be built. Management has expressed that the long-term parks planning would be difficult to complete without S. Lerner completing work at a Landscape Architect 4 level.

For all the reasons discussed in this memo, this level of work is expected at the Landscape Architect 4 level and consistent with the examples of duties and responsibilities found in that class specification. As such, I recommend the position be recreated as a Landscape Architect 4 and the incumbent reallocated to the new position.

The necessary resolution to implement this recommendation had been drafted.

Editor’s Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2020 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2020 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2020 Annual Maximum (+12% Longevity)
18/10	\$71,630.52	\$86,086.78	\$96,417.10
18/12	\$78,305.76	\$94,535.74	\$105,880.06

Cc: Eric Knepp – Parks Superintendent
 Ann Freiwald – Parks Planning and Development Manager
 Sarah Lerner—Landscape Architect 3