



Human Resources Department

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Date: March 22, 2010

To: Dan Dixon, Jerry Bentz, Amanda Frankewicz, and Ken One Peace,
Assessment Aide 2s

From Brad Wirtz, Human Resources Director

Re: Appeal of Job Study Recommendation

Thank you for meeting with me on the 19th of March to discuss the duties and responsibilities of the Assessment Aide 2 position as well as your concerns regarding the original study. In accordance with City Personnel Rules I have completed a thorough review of your appeal, the original study, and the placement of the Assessment Aide 2 classification within the City of Madison Compensation Plan. I appreciate the time you spent describing the work that you do as well as your dedication to the performance of the duties of this very important position.

After reviewing the duties performed by the Assessment Aide 2, comparable classifications, and related information, I have determined that the study performed by Sylvia Moss resulted in an accurate placement of the classification of Assessment Aide 2 within Compensation Group 16 Range 10 and the Assessment Aide 1 within Compensation Group 16 Range 08 and therefore the decision is upheld. Although I refer to your classification as Assessment Aide throughout this memo, I also agree with Sylvia's recommendation that your classification be retitled to Assessment Technician 1-2. I submit the following in support of this decision:

The classification of Property Lister (CG20-09 and 20-11) was approved by the Personnel Board in June of 2007. The Property Lister series was created by taking certain complex technical aspects of the Assessment Aide classification, including the preparation of property legal descriptions, the maintenance of the assessment roll files, and the use of mapping and related computer software, and separated these general duties out to create a distinct classification. The Property Lister also requires the same certification and training and experience as an Assessment Aide. The Property Lister Series was studied and established with Property Lister 1 & 2 at a salary range identical to the Assessment Aide 1 & 2. In reviewing the duties of the Assessment Aides it appears that there is still some cross over and Assessment Aides are performing some of the duties of a Property Lister 2 on a limited basis.

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Although this comparison might lend itself to the argument that the Assessment Aide 2 classification is properly classified at the same level as a Property Lister 2, given the technical knowledge required to perform this work in combination with the field work that is required by the Assessment Aide 2 classification, a one range higher difference between the Assessment Aide 2 and the Property Lister 2 is justified.

I also felt it would be appropriate to review the duties and responsibilities of other positions classified as "Aides." The proposed compensation group and range for the Assessment Aide 2 (CG16-10) is one range higher than the Water Quality Aide (CG16-09) and one range lower than the Engineering Aide 1 (CG16-11). This is the appropriate placement in that the field work performed by Assessment Aides is more complex in nature and requires a greater degree of technical knowledge than the Water Quality Aide. The field and office work is not as complex as the Engineering Aide 1, which requires knowledge of surveying techniques and equipment and technical drafting work. Although Assessment Aides are responsible for the use of mapping and related software, the complexity and frequency is not at the level of an Engineering Aide 1 and therefore a 1 range difference is appropriate.

The original study draws a comparison between the Assessment Aide 2 and the Property Code Inspector 1 classification (CG16-10). On whole, I believe this is a reasonable comparison. The appeal you submitted points out a higher degree of knowledge related to legal requirements and other technical requirements of the Assessment Aide 2, and the appeal indicates that this is evidenced by the fact that the City requires Assessment Aide 2s to obtain the Property Assessment Technician certification. On this I would agree, and if the decision regarding classification were based solely on technical skills and knowledge of City Ordinances or State Statutes, one could successfully argue that the Assessment Aide 2 is of greater value to the City. However, the City Personnel Rules require that Human Resources consider many aspects of each position in order to determine the appropriate classification. In reviewing the recently updated Property Code Inspector 1 classification, it is clear that Property Code Inspectors operate with more autonomy than Assessment Aide 2s whereas much of the work of an Assessment Aide 2 is done to assist a professional Property Appraiser. Examples of this sort of autonomy within the Property Code Inspector 1 classification include issuing citations, responding to complaints, speaking to neighborhood and community groups, meeting with concerned parties to resolve compliance issues, and testifying in court. If the classification decision were based solely on the basis of autonomy one could successfully argue that the Property Code Inspector 1 is of greater value to the City. I say all of this to point out that although one could argue that each job has components that would warrant greater value than the other in some respects, as a whole, many of the duties are very similar and the jobs are of similar value.

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Lastly, your appeal discusses a failed recruitment that took place in 2008, indicating that the level of pay was responsible for the lack of qualified applicants. A quick review of compensation for similar positions working for the State of Wisconsin reveals that the salary for an Assessment Aide with the City is higher than a professional Property Appraiser at the Specialist level with the State of Wisconsin. Further, the salary paid by the City far exceeds the compensation paid to an Assessment Technician working for the State of Wisconsin. This indicates that something other than salary led to the lack of candidates. Also, it should be noted that the proposed reclassification does increase the salary of the Assessment Aide and the City could choose to recruit for the position at the 2 level which would result in a 9% increase in starting salary.

Again, I want to emphasize that this determination is not a measure of your performance or lack of respect for the important work you do for the City. The classification decision is based on a comparative analysis of other positions that also perform very important and complex work for the City which is reflected by the placement of the position within range 10 of the respective compensation group. I appreciate your time and the work you do for the City and wish you the best of luck in future endeavors.

cc: Mark Hanson-City Assessor
Mike Lipski-Compensation and Benefits Manager
Sylvia Moss-HR Analyst
Mike Deiters-Labor Relations Manager
Personnel Board