

From: Karin L. Wolf
Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 4:46 PM
To: Donahue, Harper; Abdel-Halim, Emaan
Cc: Wolf, Karin
Subject: Wolf reclass appeal

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Dear Harper and Emaan,

I'm writing to request a review of the reclassification position study memo for the Arts Administrator position for the following reasons:

- 1) Inappropriate comps with other City staff positions
- 2) Undervalued level of supervisory responsibilities

Inappropriate comps with other City staff positions

I recognize that it is more difficult to classify unique City positions than those for which there is an easily recognizable precedent. While I believe that HR's position assessment was made in earnest with the available information, I do not think my position lends itself to easy comparisons to other City staff positions.

I am also concerned that the weight of the responsibilities of the Arts Administration position may have been overshadowed by individual projects or products of the role. The memo sites specific projects such as the State Street Mural program and the Music Equity project but fails to capture that those projects are almost ancillary to a position deeply rooted in the community, addressing responsibilities from public safety to cultural tourism and intersecting to multiple City agencies including Economic Development, Public Health, Civil Rights, Engineering, Community Development, and Planning.

In addition, a wide variety of constituents have expectations of the Arts Administrator position, from the Mayor and City Council to community artists, who seem to expect performance at a division director level and reflect a lack of understanding that there is one employee staffing Madison's art program

They expect to be on call at all times. Frankly, until Jan 24, when Meri Rose Ekberg was hired, there was not one other person in the City to whom I could delegate certain tasks. That meant that a Sunday morning call from a council member or a text from the Mayor or a media call while away on vacation could only be addressed by me. It is also important to note that when I started in this role in 2006, I had three major areas to direct: grants, public art, and cultural planning. At this point percent for art public art projects, music infrastructure and equity, poet laureate, and

economic recovery related to the pandemic have been added. I am juggling over 100 projects in those areas.

Undervalued level of supervisory responsibilities

A major area of concern, and one of the main reason for this request, relates to the position's supervisory responsibilities. Throughout my tenure at the City, my supervisors have recognized that the Arts Program workload is significantly under-resourced. Attempts to address understaffing and reduce my workload have fallen short of providing adequate staffing, and have been focused on increased clerical support. This may stem from the fact that the position is housed within Planning, which as a department is responsible for a completely different field than arts administration. As a result, the budget and staffing for arts administration do not adequately address that it is a professional field that requires specialized education and experience.

Until recently, the amount of support my position received was negligible and required me to work evenings and weekends, relying on my work ethic and increasing efficiencies over time to conduct the work of at least 2.5 staff people.

Being under-resourced also pushed me to find creative ways to staff the workload through interns, volunteers, and independent contractors (often paid for with private funding that I also had to secure). I have "supervised" over a hundred people during my tenure at the City. If it would aid you in supporting my reclass appeal, I would be happy to provide testimonies from them.

I appreciate that my supervisors have recently joined me in seeking relief for what is clearly an unreasonable workload. In particular, they have carved out portions of other staff's positions to assist with portions of the Arts Program. These exceptions include: Ruth Ethington who for over a decade has managed the Arts Grants system (and has been cross-training Lauren Heiser-Ertel to assume that project when Ruth retires); Angela Puerta, who has assumed leadership on the Music Equity work (20% requiring my supervision, support, and mentorship); and now Meri Rose Ekberg, who requires very little training as she came to the City with two relevant master's degrees and 5 years of work experience, at 30%. Though I deeply appreciate having these professional colleagues supporting the Arts Program, the fact that they do not report to me, yet I am ultimately responsible for their work product, presents additional challenges.

Thank you for considering my request for a reclassification. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Thank you,

Karin