

TO: Personnel Board  
FROM: William Wick, Human Resources Analyst  
DATE: December 29, 2022  
SUBJECT: Dispatcher – Water Utility (Restudy)

In June 2021, Karin Daane requested a study of her Dispatcher position (#1793), a Compensation Group 16, Range 10 position at Water Utility. The original study was conducted by Human Resources Analyst Tameaka Bryant and found “the changes the incumbent listed on [the] classification change worksheet are in line with the general description of [the] position as stated in the classification specification. . . As a result, I recommend that there be no change to the position range. . .”. This finding was appealed by Karin Daane to then Human Resources Director Harper Donahue, who reviewed and upheld the findings. Karin Daane further appealed to the Personnel Board and at its November 2, 2022 meeting, directed HR to further review the position. As outlined in the Personnel Rules (p. 14), the Personnel Board specifically directed further study of other city positions doing similar work with the software Faster and Cityworks, with similar level of autonomy and responsibility. HR Services Manager Emaan Abdel-Halim assigned the position review to me (William Wick) for restudy independent of previous findings.

Karin Daane was re-interviewed in December 2022 so that I could gain insight into the current duties and responsibilities of the Water Utility Dispatcher and into the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be able to perform the work. Additionally, Water Utility Maintenance Supervisor Doug Vanhorn was interviewed, as one of Karin’s major reasons for reclassification of the position was that the introduction and use of the Cityworks and Faster software systems for the Division’s asset management has created greater complexity in the position’s work. Her case stated Doug Vanhorn supervises the three Water Utility mechanics who, according to Karin’s supervisor, Tom Rosemeyer, Water Utility Public Works General Supervisor, “use, manage, and maintain the Faster System”. Doug Vanhorn conveyed that Karin Daane’s use of Faster involves data entry, some training of other staff, and using troubleshooting procedures found in user guides/manuals. However, if more complicated errors occurred beyond basic troubleshooting protocol, they are referred to City Information Technology or vendor technology specialists. Doug further noted that while Karin is the lead contact at Water Utility for the Faster system, including taking all calls and making work orders when field staff call, the work, in his opinion, is not substantially different or more complex than when a paper-based system was being used. Doug stated that Faster was implemented by Water Utility about a year ago in late 2021) and that he, the mechanics, Operations Manager Dan Rodefled, and Karin all went through training on use of the Faster system. Faster representatives would contact Doug, if needed, but he isn’t doing much work with the system on a daily basis. The information provided by Doug aligns with what Karin told me directly: that she has a user guide and will check error codes, but will work with City IT or Faster representatives to resolve complex system issues. Karin’s use of Cityworks and Faster is in line with the existing class specification for Dispatcher, which lists among the knowledge, skills, and abilities “Working knowledge of and ability to use computer software applicable to the duties of the position. . . ability to analyze reports of system and customer problems, recommend action and dispatch staff as needed. . . Ability to use computerized maps and records of the Water Utilities and other systems. Ability to use and maintain records, prepare reports. . .”

The class specification defines Dispatcher as:

... responsible for work in **radio dispatch and other communication** between the Water Utility and other City staff, citizens, and contractors; **coordinating response to reports of distribution system problems; using and maintaining system and work records; answering questions; and referring problems to supervisors or other staff.** Under the general supervision of a Public Works General Supervisor, this position also **maintains and updates distribution system records (e.g., hydrant, valve, and water service line records); creates work orders; initiates and updates ditch repair records; establishes priorities; and uses judgment to solve problems and transmit assignments.** [emphasis added]

For comparison, I reviewed the class specifications for a variety of positions in CG 16 Ranges 11-15, to determine what differentiates them from CG 16/Range 10 positions.

The class specification defines Water Utility "One Call" Coordinator (CG16/R11) as:

...**specialized technical work involving both field and office activities for the Water Utility.** The positions in this class **coordinate the Water Utility's response to requests processed through the Statewide "One Call" Program for the location and marking of all underground water installations throughout the City** as assigned, either Central, East, or West. The incumbent also **works with contractors and the public to ensure understanding and that established procedures are being followed in the lead replacement program. The work is performed under the limited supervision of a Public Works General Supervisor and involves prioritizing requests, locating and marking installations or making assignments to other staff, and coordinating public contacts relative to "one call" requests.** [emphasis added]

The class specification defines Water Utility Operations Leadworker (CG16/R15) as:

...**skilled project coordination work and leads a crew** consisting of Equipment Operator 3's, lower level Equipment Operators and maintenance workers **in the installation, maintenance, and repair of the Water Utility Distribution Systems.** The work of a Water Utility Operations Leadworker is **characterized by direct responsibility and accountability for all phases of assigned and emergency work projects to include: determining the materials, crew, and equipment needed; obtaining necessary utility clearances; determining the most cost-effective and timely methods to be used in making underground repairs; directing the crew in all phases of the work; and maintaining the safety of the crew and the general public.** This work requires significant independent judgment and discretion, in many situations where supervisory input is not readily available. [emphasis added]

The class specifications for both Dispatcher and "One Call" Coordinator each require working knowledge of Water Utility distribution systems and knowledge of computer software applicable to the duties of the position. The "One Call" Coordinator is also required to have working knowledge of GIS mapping systems and knowledge of field surveying equipment and methods and underground water utility installations, knowledge that is not required of the Dispatcher. As such, I cannot logically conclude that Dispatcher should be classified at or above "One Call" Coordinator within the City's classification system. While the Dispatcher position is critical to triaging calls, including in emergency situations, and dispatching work assignments, a Water Utility Operations Leadworker must also have a working knowledge of and ability to use applicable computer software, while also possessing greater knowledge of the methods, materials, and equipment used in the installation, maintenance, and repair of the water

utility distribution system (water mains, lines, valves, and hydrants), applicable safety practices and equipment, and must be able to effectively plan, assign, and directly lead the work of others.

The class specification defines Program Assistant 2 – Local 60 (CG20/R12), which has a lower pay range than Dispatcher, as:

**highly responsible, advanced-level programmatic support work in a department, division or other independent program unit.** Employees in this class **support a particular program or programs by performing or coordinating specialized program functions, interpreting and applying programmatic policies and procedures, and performing administrative tasks in support of the program.** Employees **may lead a small (2-4) assigned clerical staff and/or assist with leading non-clerical staff.** Otherwise, employees are **responsible for performing a variety of complex program related functions.** Employees in this class work under the general supervision of the department, division, or program head. Work is distinguished from a Program Assistant 1 in that a Program Assistant 2 **may have direct supervisory responsibility.** Otherwise, a Program Assistant 2 **may develop operating systems and procedures for the program,** as well as have a greater depth of knowledge, independent decision making, and coordination of program activities at a higher level than a Program Assistant 1. [emphasis added]

A Program Assistant 2 may perform many functions that are equally as complex as those performed by the Dispatcher. The Program Assistant 2 class specification further provides examples of duties and responsibilities that include leading and training other staff; assigning, prioritizing, and controlling work flow; preparing operating procedures manuals for training and for ongoing use by staff; and acting as liaison with Document Services and City IT in regard to the development, improvement, and/or implementation of new computer systems and/or equipment and ensuring that staff receive the training and ongoing support necessary to effectively use the system and providing support and problem-solving services to staff relative to software, networking, and other computer applications

For the reasons outlined above, I must conclude that Dispatcher is appropriately classified within Compensation Group 16, Range 10, absent broader changes to the classification system that are outside the scope of this particular study. Please note the 2023 budget includes funds for a full system-wide compensation study. We anticipate recommendations for salary adjustments will result from this study.

As such, I recommend that the classification of Dispatcher remain in Compensation Group 16, Range 10.

Attachment(s): Position Description

Compensation Group/ Range	2023 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2023 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2023 Annual Maximum (+ 12% Longevity)
16/10	\$53,365.78	\$59,732.14	\$ 66,900.00

Cc: Erin Hillson, Human Resources Director  
 Emaan Abdel-Halim, HR Services Manager  
 Tory Larson, Interim Employee and Labor Relations Manager  
 Krishna Kumar, Water Utility General Manager  
 Karin Daane, Dispatcher

Tom Rosemeyer, Water Utility Public Works General Supervisor  
Walt Jackson, Local 6000 Vice President  
Rick Marx, Local 6000 Representative