

TO: Personnel Board

FROM: Susan J. Gafner, Human Resources

DATE: June 26, 2017

SUBJECT: Water Utility Public Information Officer

At the request of the Water Utility General Manager, Tom Heikkinen, I have studied the position (#1869-occupied by A. Barrilleaux) and classification of Water Utility Public Information Officer (CG18, Range 08). The classification was created and classified in 2007. Over the past two years, the incumbent has taken on increased responsibility in communicating critical information to a national audience with the recent lead pipe replacement and the conservation efforts for key financial strategies for the Water Utility. After reviewing the position description (see attached), and conversations with Tom Heikkinen, Water Utility General Manager, and the incumbent, I recommend that a new series of Water Utility Public Information Officer 1 and 2 be created in CG18, Range 08 and 10 respectively, and that the incumbent be reallocated to the Water Utility Public Information Officer 2 level for the reasons outlined in this memo.

As state above, the Water Utility, in 2007, decided to create a position to handle its public information function. The classification of Water Utility Public Information Officer was created in CG18, Range 08, with the following training and experience requirements:

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.

Amy Barrilleaux was hired into the Water Utility Public Information Officer position in April of 2013. Prior to that, she worked as the News Director for a local Madison radio station, WTDY. Since her hire, Amy has played a critical role in the financial strategy for the Water utility, developing new avenues of strategic communication with the community to create a respect and understanding of how the Water Utility functions. She specifically communicates how to monitor household water usage through the Utility's website to save the public money. This is helpful when the Utility increases water rates and has decreased the number of customer complaints and questions. Amy is the key in communicating with the public as to "what does your water dollar pay for" through the Water Utility's website by showing video clips of employees on the job. Amy has also created several new initiatives such as the Water Wagon program, which has developed community partnerships with the Madison School District, and the "Got Water" program with the American Family Children's Hospital.

Amy has increased the Water Utility's social media awareness through YouTube, Facebook and Instagram, where she posts updated information about the Utility and the work it does in the community. In 2016, she started an intern program that gives opportunities to the intern to work in 37 summer events and also train on daily functions at the office. She also supervises the Water Communication Outreach Specialist position which was developed out of need due to the

workload shortly after Amy was hired in 2013. Amy most recently launched En Espanol, the Spanish translated Water Utility website. In addition to new initiative for the Water Utility, Amy has created a documentary about the history of the Utility that won a media award of “Best in Show”. Finally, the Water Utility is highly complex, dealing with the public and their concerns with the water supply and water related issues. In 2017, Amy created the first ever Strategic Communication plan and also a Crisis Communication plan to stay ahead of issues that the Water Utility will need to respond to quickly as community concerns arise.

Because of the complexity of the work in the Water Utility and the release of critical information to the public as it occurs, it is appropriate that a progression series be created. At the first level, at the current CG18, Range 08, the incumbent would be responsible for planning, developing, implementing and maintaining the communication and information programs for the Water Utility. Only a basic knowledge of promotional, public relations, journalism theories, techniques and practices would be required at the 1 level. However, during that time, the incumbent would be expected to thoroughly learn the operations and issues unique to the Water Utility. In addition, the incumbent would be required to attend trainings on computer applications, including the use of social media as it applies to the position. After approximately 2 years, when the incumbent has taken on independent responsibility for releasing information, and has attended the required training, the movement to the Water Utility Information Officer 2 level, Range 10, would be accomplished. At the higher level, the incumbent would be performing the full range of responsibilities associated with computer applications, including the use of social media as it applies to the position. The class specification (see attached) for the Water Utility Public Information Officer 2 would include the higher thorough knowledge of applicable promotional, public relations, communication theories, techniques, and practices and experience received at the higher level.

Creation of the series as outlined above would be comparable to similar PIO series’ in Police and Fire. Both agencies have a Public Information Officer, who, when hired in Range 8, have similar qualifications to the Water Utility PIO. However, after a couple years in which the incumbents are expected to learn more specific information about agency operations, they are able to advance to the 2 level, in Range 10. Regarding the Water Utility’s incumbent, because the incumbent has been performing work at the higher level for at least 2 years, it is appropriate that she be reallocated to the higher level.

We have prepared the necessary Resolution to implement this recommendation.

Attachments

Compensation Group/Range	2017 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2017 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2017 Annual Maximum +12% longevity
18/08	\$61,286	\$72,726	\$81,453
18/10	\$66,256	\$79,952	\$89,546

cc: Tom Heikkinen-Water Utility General Manager
 Greg Leifer-Labor Relations Manager
 Mike Lipski-Human Resources Manager