

TO: Personnel Board
FROM: Brittney Hayes, Human Resources
DATE: August 13, 2025
SUBJECT: Program Assistant 1 – Parks

On May 31, 2024, Joanne Austin, Administrative Supervisor at Parks, submitted a request to Human Resources for the study of Program Assistant 1 position #1454 in CG 20, Range 11; currently filled by Kevin Goke. The request indicates that this position, which has a working title of Community Services Front Desk Leadworker and Athletic Scheduling Specialist, is responsible for highly specialized functions and is expected to manage athletic scheduling. This includes reviewing and applying Qualifying Discount Program (QDP) discounts and interpreting user group agreements and Fee Modifications, as well as being the division's subject matter expert for Parks' reservation software, RecTrac, permitting software, Accela, and violation software, BadgerTracs. This position communicates regularly with athletic user groups, along with Parks' Operations and Planning staff. This position often provides leadership support for Recreation Services staff and those who work at the Warner Park Recreation Center. After a review of the updated position description, meetings with Parks Administrative Supervisor Joanne Austin, employee Kevin Goke, Parks Financial and Administrative Manager Jen Stoiber, and Warner Park Facility Manager Zachary Watson, and after a full analysis, I recommend the following for the reasons outlined in this memo.

- Delete position #1454 as a Program Assistant 1;
- Recreate position #1454 as a Program Assistant 2 in CG 20, range 12; and
- Reallocate the employee, Kevin Goke, to the new position

Position #1454 was vacant as of November 4, 2021. The position was posted as an internal promotional opportunity to employees of Parks and Forestry Divisions in January 2022. The description of the posting was "The City of Madison Parks Division is looking for their next Community Services Program Assistant 1. The successful candidate will be responsible for administrative support work for the front desk operations. This includes deposits, reservations (shelters and athletics), permit processing, boat storage agreements and customer service for the City's Parks Division. This position will work closely with the Customer Services Supervisor and will take the lead to ensure the complex athletic and shelter reservations programs are run efficiently and smoothly. The successful candidate will be under the general supervision of the Customer Services Supervisor."

A review of the classification specification for Program Assistant 1 describes the work as:

"...responsible programmatic support work in a City 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. The work requires **exercising considerable judgment and discretion** in the interpretation and application of policies...." [emphasis added]

Kevin Goke was hired to position #1454, Program Assistant 1, after going through the interview and selection process. Prior to that, Kevin had been employed as a seasonal Parks Ranger in the Parks Division from May 2016 to June 2017, then as District Parks Ranger (shift supervisor) from June 2017 to March 2022. Since March 2022, Kevin has performed the full range of functions expected of the Program Assistant 1 position. His responsibilities at this stage are centered on managing the athletic scheduling and shelter reservation software (RecTrac) for 617 individual athletic fields and courts across the system, maintaining and updating facility details, and coordinating with internal teams to block off facilities for park events such as Parks Alive and Movies in the Park. He met and communicated with prospective and returning user groups, processed reservations, interpreted and applied programmatic policies, and entered special agreement reservations while coordinating with Parks Finance for invoicing. Kevin also worked directly with the public, including contracted organizations, community groups, and individual users, to schedule reservations that met their needs. He reviewed and recommended improvements to athletic reservation processes, conducted annual planning meetings with multiple park sections to determine closures, reset the reservation system each season, audited deposits, prepared refunds, and reconciled accounts. As the primary point of contact for RecTrac issues, Kevin served as liaison between Parks staff and the software vendor, often troubleshooting and resolving issues himself before the vendor could respond.

Over time, Kevin's responsibilities expanded to serve as the lead point person for the athletic scheduling, shelter reservation, and activity registration programs. His duties now include building internal systems to ensure multiple staff are trained in RecTrac, working directly with Vermont Systems and City IT specialists to set up and maintain the software, and troubleshooting complex technical issues with a high degree of independence and discretion. Kevin also trains Parks staff at various levels to use RecTrac, Accela, and BadgerTrac effectively, provides ongoing oversight and guidance to three Administrative Clerks, and reassigns work that he previously performed, such as daily deposits, BadgerTracs data entry, and permit processing, to those staff under his direction. His leadership extends to developing and maintaining multiple Standard Operating Procedures and performing accounts payable and other confidential financial functions.

Next, a review of the classification specification for Program Assistant 2 describes the work 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..... 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]

Kevin plays a central role in major initiatives such as implementing a new age-limit policy for pool patrons and integrating it into the pool pass system, creating macros to streamline workflows, and compiling and reporting reservations, registrations, and financial data to inform future workflows and fee structures. His expanded duties require higher-level decision-making, technical expertise,

and leadership - responsibilities that are consistent with and demonstrative of the Program Assistant 2 position description.

The additional duties and responsibilities taken on by this position, most notably the full-cycle management of the Parks Division's athletic scheduling, managing the reservation software, serving as the point person/trainer for BadgerTracs and Accela, performing lead worker duties, and managing all Standard Operating Procedures, reflect a higher level of independent decision-making, program coordination, and leadworker responsibilities. The position's scope now encompasses advanced programmatic oversight with significant financial, operational, and customer service impacts, extending well beyond the typical parameters of a Program Assistant 1 role.

Two Program Assistant positions also in Parks were reviewed as part of this study; the Program Assistant 2 position at Olbrich Gardens and the Program Assistant 2 position at Warner Park. These positions focus primarily on managing facility scheduling, processing rentals through RecTrac software, coordinating with internal and external vendors, performing billing activities, and other various administrative duties.

As part of the position study analysis, the Administrative Assistant classification was also considered, with a review of the classification specification describes the work as:

“...responsible for **developing and implementing major divisional** or departmental **administrative programs**, preparing and maintaining **complex budgetary records**, coordinating purchasing and personnel transactions, supervising office support services, and directly overseeing integrated administrative functions.” [emphasis added]

A review of the internal comparable Administrative Assistant positions currently in Parks' financial unit; indicated the primary payroll and purchasing functions for the Parks Division. These duties include: overseeing major general billing and contracts, such as Big Top Events (Breese Stevens, generating \$82,000+ annually) and Madison Mallards (\$74,000+ annually), in addition to managing over 100 other contracts that involve billing for **field**, shelter, facility, and boat launch usage as well as utilities; overseeing the Parks budget and monitoring all spending and payments; performing critical HR functions, including payroll administration for 154 FTEs, LTEs, permanent part-time, and provisional staff, along with 295 hourly/seasonal employees; processing FMLA and Worker's Compensation cases; managing NeoGov process to support the seasonal hiring; and conducting audits, major financial data analysis and reporting.

Additionally, a recent vacancy in Monona Terrace for an Administrative Assistant was also reviewed for comparison. The duties listed on the job posting included: developing budgetary and fiscal controls documentation; serving as Records Custodian; performing legislative tasks and providing administrative support to the Monona Terrace Board and its subcommittees; and contributing to operational development by designing and teaching courses, along with leading internal staff trainings.

In comparison, this Program Assistant that was studied has responsibilities which do not rise to the level of the Administrative Assistant classification. Based on the analysis detailed in this memo, I

recommend that Program Assistant position #1458 in CG 20, Range 11 be recreated as a Program Assistant 2, CG 20, Range 12, and that the employee, K. Goke, be reallocated to the new position.

The necessary resolution has been prepared to implement these recommendations.

Editor's Note:

Effective Date: June 9, 2024 (retroactive)

Compensation Group/Range	2025 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2025 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2025 Annual Maximum (+12% Longevity)
20/11	\$58,292.00	\$65,248.30	\$73,078.20
20/12	\$59,727.72	\$66,980.16	\$75,017.80

Cc: Erin Hillson, Director of Human Resources
Kurt Rose, Employee and Labor Relations Manager
Lisa Laschinger, Interim Parks Superintendent
Joanne Austin, Customer Services Supervisor
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