

Agenda Report



MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 18, 2025

TO: Personnel Commission

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR LINDBERG

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF REVISED PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES JOB CLASSIFICATIONS

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is recommended that the Personnel Commission approve the updated Public Works & Utilities job descriptions for the following classifications, and associated proposed salary changes where applicable:

- Wastewater Operations Supervisor-revised job description at current salary with negotiated certification pay
- Utilities Maintenance Mechanic III-revised job description at current salary
- Principal Engineer-salary increase of 10%

DISCUSSION:

The City of Watsonville continues to undergo a city-wide classification and compensation study. The City has put an extended pause on bringing new and updated job descriptions and salary adjustments forward pending the results of the study and potential implementation through upcoming negotiations. However, there are a few critical updates that require more urgent action. They are listed in detail below:

Wastewater Operations Supervisor

An update to the Wastewater Division Manager job classification was approved previously to remove the requirement for a Grade V license, making it an optional certification for that position. This helped align the requirements of the position to the actual job duties, allowing the City maximum flexibility now and in the future to recruit and retain qualified candidates for the Division Manager role.

As a corollary, the Wastewater Operations Supervisor classification needs to be updated to add the Grade V license requirement into the position, which will allow this position the option to serve as the City's Wastewater Treatment Chief Plant Operator (CPO) registered with the State Water Board. The CPO is required to sign and file all reporting required to maintain regulatory compliance and holds direct control over the day-to-day operation of the plant, which aligns better with the supervisor job classification. Currently the classification only requires a Grade IV license, which makes it ineligible to serve as

CPO, since the treatment plant is a Class V facility. It is recommended the increased license requirements result in certification pay which will be discussed and negotiated with the Mid-Management bargaining unit and included as part of a side letter agreement and later incorporated in the MOU. This will be further reviewed as part of the upcoming classification and compensation study as all classifications in the Wastewater division and the relationships between them must be considered.

Utilities Maintenance Mechanic III

The Utilities Maintenance Mechanic III job classification currently requires a crane operator certification be obtained and maintained to meet minimum qualifications. The City no longer owns any equipment that requires a crane operator certification and the position does not provide sufficient operating time on an annual basis to maintain a certification if it were obtained. It is therefore recommended the crane certification requirement be removed from the job classification. There is no change to the salary.

Principal Engineer

The Public Works and Utilities Department has been understaffed in the Engineering Division for several years, with anticipated retirement of the majority of remaining engineering staff anticipated over the next year. Despite multiple attempts at recruiting, offering a hiring bonus, and advertising the position at a lower experience level, the City has been unsuccessful in attracting candidates for the vacant engineering positions. As a result, consultants have been hired to assist with maintaining an acceptable level of service for these critical engineering services. These services have included traffic engineering, project management, grant application and administration, program development, development and plan-check review, stormwater management, and general staff augmentation services.

It is recommended that the Principal Engineer salary be increased by 10% across all steps in an effort to recruit senior engineering staff to fill urgent existing needs within the department. It is noted that the classification and compensation study may recommend an additional increase once completed and will also examine all other engineering positions.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

These job classification updates and salary changes where applicable are
2-Infrastructure & Environment
7-Efficient and Well-performing Government

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Wastewater Operations Supervisor: No net impact is anticipated from this increase in salary as the City is currently contracting out CPO services.

Utilities Maintenance Mechanic III: No financial impacts.

Principal Engineer: This will increase the Principal Engineer salaries 10%. If the position is successfully recruited, the cost addition will be offset by the reduction in consultant services that may be needed, likely with a net savings.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

No reasonable alternatives are known at this time.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

Updated job classifications.