

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, April 23, 2007

1. Pursuant to due call and notice the Civil Service Commission of the City of Dickinson met at City Hall, Monday, April 23, 2007 at 9:00 AM.
2. ROLL CALL:
Present were: Todd Tavis, Ron Lisko, Erv Bren and Cal Kolling
Absent was: Ray Ann Kilen
Also present was: Greg Sund, Skip Rapp, Ken Kussy, Stewart Stenberg, Shawn Soehren, Jan Zent, Bob Sivak, Ed Krank, Darryl Wehner, Scott Cooke and Jim Jablonsky
3. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS:
MOTION BY: Ron Lisko SECONDED BY: Erv Bren
To approve the order of business as amended adding the Property Appraiser Technician position as item h and moving other to item i.
DISPOSITION: Motion carried unanimously.
4. CONSENT AGENDA:
MOTION BY: Cal Kolling SECONDED BY: Ron Lisko
A. Approve minutes of March 19, 2007 as presented.
DISPOSITION: Motion carried unanimously.
5. GENERAL ISSUES
 - A. HR Journal
Cianni stated the Head Water Utilities Specialist Position was opened internally, with one application received by Ken Miller. Cianni stated Miller stepped down from the Assistant Public Works Manager position to accept the Head Water Utilities Specialist Position. Cianni indicated staff has decided to leave the Assistant Public Works Manager vacant and hire a third Head Water Utilities Specialist position. The position will be posted in the near future. Cianni told the Commission there are two vacant positions at the Police Department. Cianni stated the position has been posted internally and will open to the public later today. Cianni stated the City is still accepting applications for seasonal employment.
 - B. Police Department Testing Process
Stenberg gave a review of the new company chosen for the police officer exams. Cianni stated, as requested at the previous meeting, staff had contacted the company and learned percentile score compares the candidate to all other test takers. Cianni stated in visiting with Ergometrics, a passing score is 70% or higher. Cianni stated staff has decided the exam will be a pass/fail exam, anyone with a score of 70% or higher will continue through the scoring process.

Sund stated reiterated there are currently two openings, with the possibility of a third, as Lieutenant Bill Leach has given notice he is scheduled to be deployed to Iraq. Tavis questioned what would happen when Leach returned, would the additional police officer position go away. Sund indicated details for this position would need to be worked out,

but added if attrition does not lead to an additional opening, yes the person hired in Leach's absence could facing losing he/her position up his return.

Cianni stated the only item needing a decision by staff is how long the test will be good for and that staff would report this at the next meeting.

C. Approval of Job Description Annual Updates

Tavis stated the Commission will look at each job description individually and make any necessary changes and then approve the job descriptions in a group. Sund stated the detail was removed from the Essential Duties to make the essential duty stand out.

Through review and discussion minor changes were made to the following job descriptions: Utility Billing Clerk (data entry requirements), Property Appraiser (licensing requirements), City Assessor (grading of duties 1 and 2), Public Works Manager – Water Utilities and Buildings/Grounds (position summary and percentages of essential duties), City Engineer (grading for duty number 3), Police Officer (duty number 2 amended), Police Sergeant (duty number 2 amended) and Public Safety Support Supervisor (position requirements).

The Library Director position was pulled from the review. The Commission asked staff to confirm the licensing requirements and place the job description on the next agenda for approval. The Assistant Superintendent of Code Enforcement/Zoning Job Description was moved to item i as the title is also being changed.

MOTION BY: Ron Lisko SECONDED BY: Erv Bren
To approve the job descriptions as presented (Historic Preservationist/Museum Center Director, Public Works Manager – Streets and Solid Waste, Librarian, Signing Specialist, Senior Engineering Technician, Firefighter, Senior Firefighter, Fire Engineer, Fire Prevention Specialist, Fire Chief, Senior Police Officer, Police Lieutenant and Police Chief) and to approve the job descriptions as amended (Utility Billing Clerk, Property Appraiser, City Assessor, Public Works Manager – Water Utilities and Buildings/Grounds, City Engineer, Police Officer, Police Sergeant and Public Safety Support Supervisor).

DISPOSITION: Motion carried unanimously.

D. Reclassification Requests of Public Works Specialist, Senior Public Works Specialist, Senior Equipment Mechanic

Tavis stated the reclassification request was received in April/May of 2006 and is being addressed now, as the job descriptions have recently been updated. Tavis stated the Commission will start with the Public Works Specialists reclassification requests.

Krank stated there has been considerable change to the position since the original Fox, Lawson and Associates study, justifying the requested reclassification. Krank stated originally the operating of heavy equipment was graded at an A1 level duty. Cooke stated the position has been misclassified since the start. Krank stated when the study was done the position did not include the on-call duty as it does now. Sund stated with the heavy equipment duty misclassified, correcting it does not create justification for reclassification of the position. Krank stated employees on-call are required to make

independent decision giving them a greater responsibility. Sund stated decisions made on-call duties are still operational in nature. Krank also stated the responsibility has grown, in the past the position did patching of pot holes, where now the position could recreate streets.

Tavis questioned the supervision, is there anyone onsite telling the Specialist what to do. Kussy stated the Specialists are skilled operators working on expensive machines and completing expensive projects with limited supervision. Kussy stated we're not paying for skilled operators. Lisko questioned if the request affects more than the street department. Tavis stated it would affect all Specialists. Lisko questioned if this was a problem affecting all areas. Kussy stated the equipment operator operates anything from the lawn mower to the sweeper, but the heavy equipment requires skilled operators. Sund stated the City does not have a medium equipment operator position.

Tavis questioned traffic control at the projects. It was stated the specialist must be familiar with the code and provide signage as required. Sund stated a Signing Specialist is at a B22 and has to know the entire traffic control code. Wehner stated the decision as to what option to fix the repair needs to be made. Tavis asked who decides. Wehner stated all, if a Senior Specialist is on site they make the decision but if the Specialist is the only one on the job site, they would make the decision. Tavis stated the Senior is one grade above the Specialist. Tavis questioned if all the Specialists make this decision. Krank stated there are a couple that do and couple that don't, which carries across the Public Works system. Discussion led into the current classification system. Sund stated the system is rigid. Wehner stated there is nothing available or set for reaching achievements above the minimum requirements. Sund stated a broadband system has been proposed, but rejected several times. Krank stated he feels the City is not doing justice to the current employees and things need to change or the City will lose employees. Sund feels the argument is for more Senior Specialist positions. Lisko suggested making more employees Senior or something in between the two positions. Sund stated there isn't an in between grade available. Cooke stated the City has grown, but the department has remained the same size and employees have stepped up and taken on more responsibility. Tavis stated with the current system does not reward good employees. Sund stated its been proposed to pay more for when doing a job at a higher level but has been rejected by the employees.

Wehner stated the reclassification is requested as there are additional duties from the original Fox, Lawson and Associates study, one being the on call duty. Tavis questioned what level the on-call duty was for other positions. Sund stated on-call requires operational decisions if an employee is called out. Sund also stated maintaining work zone safety is already classified as a B22 duty.

Discussion continued regarding other duties performed, specifically operating of heavy equipment, mechanical skills and welding. Kolling questioned if operation of heavy equipment was high enough at a B2 because of the decision making it requires. Krank stated mechanical skills are necessary as employees assist the mechanic when able. Krank also noted welding is important at times equipment needs to be modified.

Tavis questioned Kussy and Rapp about their support for the reclassification. Kussy stated the issue needs to be closely examined. Kussy continued the positions were originally classified lower than they should have been and if something isn't done the City could stand to lose employees. Sund stated we could promote all the operators to Senior Public Works Specialist as they gain the required operator experience if we had a broadband system, which has repeatedly been rejected.

Tavis asked for comments from Rapp. Rapp stated within his operations, some of the employees could be moved to a senior level, but some do not do that level of work. Rapp stated the duties are operational. Rapp suggested "add" pay for the certifications when the employee is given more responsibilities. Rapp stated the dispatchers were recently reclassified due to the market.

Tavis stated the reclassification is based on additional duties, but pay is also an issue with the reclassification. Tavis stated the employees are concerned with how much are you going to pay me, while Civil Service needs to decide if the position is properly classified or if it should be moved to a B23. Kolling commented the issues are tied together. Tavis agreed, but the Commission needs to try and deal with them separately.

Tavis asked for comments regarding the Senior Public Works Specialist. Wehner went through the duties indicating some of them were not in the old job description, but are now included in the updated description. Wehner stated the arguments for the Senior position are similar to that of the Specialist, but also that it is felt the position was originally misclassified. Kussy stated at the Senior level the employees are considered at a master level or skilled. Sund stated this becomes a subjective decision. Tavis concurred, stating it is very subjective in determining a skilled position. Tavis stated operators are hired at a lower level with his company and after a specified time they are moved up if they are working at the level needed or they are let go.

Krank stated he would like to see the Head position be used in both the Street and Solid Waste Departments. Krank stated our landfill operator is the lowest paid in the state and should be at a head level position rather than the senior level position. Rapp stated the position would be similar to a foreman position with the providing technical advice when on a job with Specialist and Senior Specialist.

Sund stated he would work up a draft Head position for the street department. Rapp thought it should be written around foreman type duties as the City is missing this type of position. Wehner indicated going this direction could take care of the problems. Krank questioned if the number of Senior Specialist positions are set in stone. Sund stated no, but there needs to be a measurable way to test if the employee's ability is at the Senior level. Krank stated he would try to work on this. Sund stated if there is a measurable way to move employees up it would be an easier sell to the City Commission.

Tavis stated no decisions can be made regarding the reclassifications for the Public Works Specialist and the Senior Public Works Specialist. Lisko stated Sund and the department heads need to come up with a plan or direction for the Public Works Departments. Tavis tabled the reclassifications to the next regular Civil Service Meeting.

