

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: MID-YEAR STAFFING AUTHORIZATIONS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Additions to the City's permanent workforce are nearly always presented for Council authorization during the annual budget process and don't take effect until July 1<sup>st</sup> of the following fiscal year. However, staff has identified two very unusual situations where authorizing staff now will best meet our citizens' service level needs. These involve a .25 FTE addition at the Library, and a .5 FTE addition to the City Clerk's staff.

**Library IT Client Support Technician**

The Library is proposing converting an IT Client Support Technician from .75 FTE to 1.0 FTE. The primary purpose for this change is to address the difficulty in finding qualified part-time IT staff. The Library has attempted, but has been unsuccessful in filling the position at  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. Additionally, the increase in hours will help the Library support the increased customer demands on its technology services. The Library will not request any changes in FTE level in the FY 2017/18 proposed budget.

The IT Client Support Technician classification is a pay grade 57, which would not change as a result of this FTE adjustment. Staff estimates increasing to a 1.0 FTE position in January would result in an increased cost of \$10,291 in salary and benefits for the remainder of the fiscal year. However, salary savings from this position being vacant would ensure funding is available in the adopted FY 2016/17 budget. In the full 2017/18 fiscal year, this change in FTEs would result in increased salary and benefits costs of approximately \$20,582, in addition to costs associated with a merit salary increase. These estimates assume the highest price health care option is chosen and that the individual is hired at the midpoint of the salary range.

**City Clerk's Office Clerical Support**

The situation in the City Clerk's Office involves a pressing work load demand and two position vacancies. For many years the City Clerk has personally taken and prepared minutes for nearly all of the City Council's meetings. These total over 50 meetings each year. When combined with the Clerk's other duties, this has frequently led to the Clerk working in excess of 70 hours per week.

In order to address this situation in the most cost-effective manner, staff first sought to recruit a part-time minute taker to handle these meetings. Unfortunately, that effort was unsuccessful. However, another approach to meet this need is arising from turnover in the two 25-hour/week support staff positions. One of these is currently vacant, and the individual serving in the other position has expressed a desire to retire in April. This creates an opportunity to take a new approach to the two positions in a way that

expands hours available for minute taking while covering the positions' existing responsibilities.

It is proposed that these two positions, currently budgeted for a total of 50 hours/week at 1.0 FTE, now be expanded to 60 hours/week and 1.5 FTE. This combination of a full-time position with a half-time position will then assume responsibility for taking minutes at all City Council meetings. Approving this FTE change now will allow staff to fill the new full-time position in short order so that the orientation/transition for that employee can occur prior to April, when the second vacancy is expected to occur.

The current year's adopted budget for these two positions was \$80,186. However, in this unique situation both of the original employees opted out of City health insurance, providing an annual savings to the City of up to \$20,047 for both employees. In contrast, when budgeting for new positions, staff assumes that new employees will avail themselves of the highest priced health insurance option available. This insures that the approved budget will cover all costs for the new position. With this conservative approach, it is estimated that having 1.5 FTE will cost \$102,072 per year at the entry level of pay.

Any shortfall between the adopted and revised budgets for FY 2016/17 will be covered from existing salary savings stemming from the current vacancy. The additional funding estimated at \$21,886 needed in FY 2017/18 will be included in the City Manager's recommended budget.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Authorize the 0.25 FTE increase at the Ames Public Library and the .5 FTE increase to the City Clerk's staff effective immediately, with the respective budget changes to be confirmed as part of Council's upcoming budget hearings.
2. Do not authorize these FTE changes at this time.

**MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The change in the Library IT Client Support Technician FTE will allow the Library to better serve its customers and will increase the likelihood of finding a qualified professional in that field who can successfully perform the job. Approving the staffing change in the City Clerk's Office will provide an immediate avenue to use two current and upcoming vacancies to move the Council minute-taking responsibilities to other staff.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as stated above.