

# Sub-Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 6, 2007

Chair Lynn McCrory called the Committee Meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

BOARD PRESENT: Lynn McCrory, Ian Costa, Donald Fujimoto, Steven Kyono, Roy Oyama and Bernie Sakoda.

STAFF PRESENT: Debra Togioka and Guests: Keith Fujimoto and Bruce Inouye

## POSITION DESCRIPTIONS:

The Board reviewed the position descriptions to initially re-describe it to be an EM-7 instead of an EM-5 position, which would require more overall responsibility.

Ms. Togioka stated that the DOW's official Table of Organization has not been changed yet so the EM-7 position still stands. There was no formal action to revise the Table of Organization with the Department of Personnel Services (DPS). (even though the Board did previously approve to have 2 EM-5 positions instead of the EM-7 position.)

Based on the updated Position Description that was done at the last Sub-Committee of the Whole, the Board reviewed that position description again to verify any needed changes. (See updated position descriptions as per January 29, 2007 Board Report by Chair McCrory). The following in double underline were the recommended changes to the Engineering Division Chief's position, with the deletions in parenthesis:

### Technical (70%):

Directs review and approves plans, estimates, specifications and contract documents for public or private developments.

Directs (Coordinates) the procurement of professional services and other purchases of goods and services except for Water Plan 2020.

Directs (Coordinates) all construction projects, including bids and contracts, other than Water Plan 2020 projects.

Maintains land records, other than Water Plan 2020.

There were no recommended changes to the Water Plan 2020 Division Chief.

## DISCUSSION:

On query by Mr. D. Fujimoto, Ms. Togioka stated that there was no one that stated that they could not go back to the old way of having 2 EM-5 positions; however, with the Board's focus on Water Plan 2020 that was part of the EM-7's position description, the 2 old EM-5 position descriptions are not applicable. Ms. McCrory added that it was not that it could not be done but the EM-5 position descriptions that were referenced by Mr. D. Fujimoto needed to be re-done by including updated duties of the positions.

Mr. D. Fujimoto felt that he was misunderstood on his intent, which was not to go down that route with these positions; these positions were only to reinforce the existing structure to be more solid and not to

# Sub-Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 6, 2007

have the 2 EM-5 positions to be split up and one of them to take charge of Water Plan 2020. He added that the EM-7 position was not really designed to also handle Water Plan 2020.

Mr. D. Fujimoto stated that he got some feedback from the staff, as they are very concerned about what the Board is doing. He felt that the Manager should technically get some input in this process. Chair McCrory responded that Acting Manager Ushigome could not be part of this process as she recused herself due to a potential conflict of interest if she would apply for any of these EM-5 positions. He concurred that it would be a potential conflict of interest and that he recognized the need for an EM-7 for Water Plan 2020.

He reiterated that he felt that these 2 EM-5 positions were to reinforce the existing structure. Chair McCrory added that she understood that and what also occurred was that they cannot use the old position descriptions and they need to be where they are presently as the Board needs to review, update and justify the position descriptions.

Mr. Kyono verified with the other Board members of what was and what the Board plans this situation to be. He stated that the Board already took an official action of changing the existing EM-7 position into 2 EM-5 positions. Therefore, he questioned that there are 2 EM-5 positions created so the path is to undo the Board's official action and going back to what it was and adding another EM-7 position? Mr. Kyono also stated that only when a government position is vacant that you can re-describe it, which is an opportune time to re-do the position description. If there were an incumbent, then the incumbent would have to agree to any changes. Therefore, the Board could at this time undo, rewrite and add another position.

Mr. Fujimoto stated that the staff is very interested in what the Board does so their decision has to be done carefully to not upset employee morale. He heard that one of the concerns of staff was why is the Board creating more EM-7 positions in the Engineering Division and outsourcing anyway. Also, they are saying why is the rest of the staff not getting equally compensated, as it should be looked at across the entire Department. Chair McCrory added that the effort by the Board now is to support Water Plan 2020.

Chair McCrory and Mr. D. Fujimoto heard different opinions from staff on whether their concurrence with what the Board was doing with these positions.

Some confusion ensued as to what was previously stated and approved about these positions; however, Mr. D. Fujimoto's present position is that he would want to have 2 EM-5 positions to support the Engineering Division with an EM-7 position to support Water Plan 2020.

On query by Chair McCrory, Mr. D. Fujimoto stated that there was no doubt about it that more staff is needed in the Engineering Division. Mr. Kyono added that reality is that there is a nationwide engineering shortage, which has been confirmed by NSPE, the National Society of Professional Engineers; therefore, where would we get all these engineers to fill these positions?

Mr. D. Fujimoto stated that there are engineers internally at the DOW that are qualified for these positions. His original intent was always to build staff and staff's morale and it was not the additional

# Sub-Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 6, 2007

need to address Water Plan 2020. Although he would be willing to have the Water Plan 2020 position be an EM-7. He felt that the Board would be criticized with the new EM-7 position as it would be seen as the Board is spending more money; however, the staff needs help more than more pay compensation, although that does not hurt either. He felt that to have the 2 EM-5 positions it would be easier to fill internally as it would be easier to qualify by the present EM-3 staff. He felt that an EM-7 position would minimize the chances of the present staff to qualify for these positions and to get the job first.

Chair McCrory and Mr. Kyono begged to differ. Mr. Costa added that it may send a message to the EM-3 positions that advancement may probably not happen unless you can qualify from an EM-3 to an EM-7 position, which would realistically be filled by someone from the outside.

Mr. Kyono stated that how the minimum qualifications are written is important to ensure that our EM-3 positions would be able to qualify.

Mr. Kyono reiterated that it was originally that the Board approved to have the EM-7 turn into 2 EM-5 positions, then it was revised to undo the 2 EM-5 positions to bring back the EM-7 and to add an EM-7 for Water Plan 2020; however, at today's meeting, Mr. D. Fujimoto brought up that he wants to keep the 2 EM-5 positions for private projects and to add an EM-7 for Water Plan 2020.

Mr. Kyono further discussed a proposal that knowing that we have 2 good employees in EM-3 positions that 2 EM-3 positions be reallocated to EM-5 positions and to have an EM-7 overseeing the 2 EM-5 positions for program-wide responsibility. Mr. D. Fujimoto had difficulty giving raises without additional responsibility. Chair McCrory stated that it could be added into the position descriptions. Mr. Kyono stated that the EM-7 would be overseeing the program management of the Special Projects and Engineering Divisions. Mr. D. Fujimoto added that previously there was no need for oversight and all he recommends doing is to strengthen the foundation.

On discussion by Mr. D. Fujimoto, Chair McCrory stated that history has shown that oversight over both the private projects and Water Plan 2020 cannot be done that is why they want to separate the private projects and Water Plan 2020. Mr. D. Fujimoto felt that even without the Water Plan 2020 projects, there will still have a lot to do so let the staff focus on private projects. Mr. Kyono added that we would have to remember that we would need to transition to have one of our staff eventually resume the position that would oversee our Water Plan 2020 projects.

Mr. D. Fujimoto summarized that he felt that all of the Board agreed that Water Plan 2020 deserves an EM-7 position.

Chair McCrory also summarized what is on the books now is that the Board has approved 2 EM-5 positions, one EM-5 for Water Plan 2020 and one for the Engineering Division. She felt that in the near future more positions would be needed, which is unclear now when and what it will be – whether it is more EM-5s, etc. However for now, the EM-5 position should be kept as is and if going forward that it is warranted to be an EM-7, we would then work towards getting the position to an EM-7.

Mr. D. Fujimoto suggested going forward with the EM-7 position for Water Plan 2020 and to table the 2 EM-5 positions. Chair McCrory stated that we still do have an EM-7 on the books; therefore, the Board needed to resolve this dilemma otherwise the staff would continue to be unsettled and concerned.

# Sub-Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 6, 2007

Mr. Kyono added that although some of the viewpoints that Mr. D. Fujimoto pointed out were from the Fiscal staff, he felt that input from the engineers would validate what the Board should do. He suggested that a workshop with the staff is warranted.

On query by Mr. Costa, Chair McCrory stated that whether the Water Plan 2020 engineer is an EM-5 or an EM-7, that position would report to the DOW Manager.

Mr. Kyono suggested that the TO he would recommend is to have an EM-7 oversee 3 EM-5 positions that would be the Special Projects, Engineering and Water Plan 2020 in order to have coordination among the divisions, especially when Water Plan 2020 does not have oversight from our consultant. Chair McCrory felt that Water Plan 2020 could always be a separate section as she felt that she would not want to hear an excuse that Water Plan 2020 could not be done because of other duties. She added that private projects are also important as she gets a couple of complaint calls every week.

Chair McCrory stated that she is concerned about having an EM-7 oversee the Water Plan 2020 projects and the other divisions, as it would create a blockage; the EM-5 position would instead report directly to the Manager, which she recommended is best.

Mr. Kyono then suggested that there should be 3 positions at the EM-5 level and then the EM-3 positions can apply and see down the road which EM-5s deserves the EM-7 position. The Manager would oversee and coordinate these positions. Then maybe a year later if it is warranted that the position could then be reallocated to an EM-7 position. The rest of the Board concurred.

On query by Chair McCrory, Ms. Togioka stated that the differences in the positions would need to be identified in order to do the position descriptions.

Mr. Kyono stated that the EM-3 position descriptions would need to be used and to add administrative duties to craft the EM-5 positions. Chair McCrory added that the position descriptions should be updated and crafted so that it would be ready for when Water Plan 2020 is re-activated.

Ms. Sakoda clarified that all the Board needs to do is approve a new EM-5 position for Water Plan 2020 as the Board already approved the EM-7 position to be changed to 2 EM-5 positions. On query by Ms. Sakoda, Chair McCrory stated that the Water Plan 2020 position would only be under the Manager as the Manager would be the only one that is accountable and the other 2 EM-5 positions could be under the Deputy. It was stated that the Manager could appoint the Deputy Manager to assist with the oversight of Water Plan 2020, which Chair McCrory hoped would not happen.

As there was some confusion on the makeup of the Special Projects and Engineering Divisions and the specific duties of each division, the Board had Keith Fujimoto and Bruce Inouye join this meeting to assist with further discussions.

Mr. D. Fujimoto left the meeting at about 9:50 a.m.

# Sub-Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 6, 2007

## STEP INCREASES

Mr. Kyono explained that the Department of Transportation (DOT) may be the only State agency that is doing this but they are actively recruiting employees into the organization as they could offer up to the maximum step pay for engineers since there is a national shortage. He added, however, that this process could also create internal morale problems, as the DOT employees with longevity would get upset if someone from the outside is hired instead.

Mr. Costa left at about 9:55 a.m.

This matter was brought up in order to mitigate more DOW engineering employees to not migrate to the DOT. Chair McCrory also brought up that this issue would need to be reviewed departmentwide to not have low morale issues if pay disparity becomes an issue. This was an issue that Acting Manager Ushigome would have been invited to this meeting to discuss but she had to attend the same meeting with the Mayor as Mr. Costa and Mr. D. Fujimoto.

Ms. Togioka stated that RW Beck would be assisting the DOW in the benchmarking of looking at all DOW positions departmentwide. Chair McCrory felt that it would be fair to all employees to do it departmentwide. It was felt that it would be really hard to do with collective bargaining issues. Mr. Kyono added that DOT could only do this because of the national engineering shortage.

Chair McCrory stated that she would update the draft position descriptions.

Mr. K. Fujimoto and Mr. Inouye were present at the meeting at about 10:20 a.m.

Chair McCrory gave them an overview of what the Board decided and also the Board wanted to get information from them to help them define the difference between the Special Projects and Design and Construction Division. They need that information to assist them to write the 2 EM-5 position descriptions and how the TO should look like.

Mr. Fujimoto and Mr. Inouye both gave a description on their duties.

One thing to note is that if for some reason the Board decides to eliminate the EM-3 position in the Design and Construction Division that the oversight of the Micro Lab personnel would need to be addressed. Chair McCrory stated that this could be addressed at a later date. On query by Chair McCrory, Mr. K. Fujimoto stated that presently the Micro Lab temporarily reports to the Deputy Manager.

Chair McCrory and Mr. K. Fujimoto discussed a potential plan for succession planning for their divisions; whereby, there would be an employee to shadow the person about to retire.

Chair McCrory discussed with Mr. K. Fujimoto and Mr. Inouye, the recruitment plans of the State DOT and the County Public Works Department on recruiting new employees for their vacant engineering positions. Mr. K. Fujimoto and Mr. Inouye both stated that their present divisions on whether people stay or not are not all about money. Mr. K. Fujimoto stated that it could help with recruiting new employees and keep the younger employees.

# Sub-Committee of the Whole Meeting

March 6, 2007

The Board thanked Mr. K. Fujimoto and Mr. Inouye for their assistance.

The Sub-Committee of the Whole was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rona Miura, Secretary

APPROVED:

Lynn McCrory, Chairperson  
BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY

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