# December 2, 2011

TO: Claudia Hazelhurst

FROM: Laura Conant

RE: Public Information Manager Classification and Pay History

As part of the recent review by department heads of the reclassifications recommended to be implemented in 2012, Rich and Laurie discussed the Public Information Manager's pay. Rich and Laurie reported that the incumbent, Sam Rainguet, feels Human Resources has not responded to her concerns about the classification and compensation of her position. In addition, Laurie is concerned that Sam did not receive the correct pay increase in 2008 because of mistakes made by Human Resources staff. I can assure you that the only mistake made was my attempt to discuss this topic from memory without having the data and reports from four years ago in front of me. This purpose of this memo is to provide accurate details regarding this position.

## Market Survey Data

The last comprehensive market survey was conducted in 2007 and results were implemented in January, 2008. Human Resources staff compiles market data for both benchmark positions and non-benchmark positions. The non-benchmark positions are positions that are included in the CML survey but are not one of the positions the City of Grand Junction uses as a benchmark. This data is used to ensure that our internal alignment of positions within a benchmark is reasonable. Since 1998 when the pay plan was implemented, HR staff uses a guideline that a non-benchmark position that is more than 10% above or below market may need to be realigned unless there are circumstances that can explain the variance. If a position falls outside of this parameter, the practice is to flag the position to watch in the next survey cycle in order to determine if the under or over market trend continues.

In July 2007, the market data showed the Communications and Communication Relations Coordinator would be 10.26% below market after applying the proposed market adjustment of the benchmark. This was noted in the summary report and flagged as a position to watch in the next survey cycle. Toward the end of 2007, the City Manager made the decision that in addition to the variable market adjustments, the City would also give a Cost-of-Living increase of 3%. The position received a 7.2% increase in 2008 which reduced the under market percentage as a non-benchmark to 6.86%, within the acceptable range.

Under our new pay plan and structure, the City Public Information Manager (new title) is a benchmark position which will tie marketing and communications positions to market. The survey data compiled this year shows the benchmark is under market by 10.77%. As you are aware, there are many factors influencing the survey data this year, the biggest one being the elimination of the ERI (which reduced

wages in the past by 12% on average). In addition we have new market cities and a new factor of comparison to market.

Due to budget constraints, the decision was made that we would not implement the results of the market survey but would propose reinstating the 3% reduced in 2010. With the 3% increase, the City Public Information Manager will be 7.77% under market (using the new pay plan and assuming no changes for other entities) for 2012.

### Response to Employee Requests

Sam has provided to us a copy of an email or letter she sent you and I on 11/28/07. The letter requests that we review the Public Information Officer group during the City's compensation study. She asks that three areas be looked at: the benchmark, the level of responsibility in the job and the comparable market. While I can't find a record of my response to her(because email archive does not go back that far) nor can I recall getting an email, I would have responded letting her know that we would consider her information in the study and that she will have the opportunity to provide information to the consultant directly through her Job Analysis Questionnaire and interview. The date of her request was past the time that we had done job audits for the 2008-09 budget cycle (completed in August 2007). Her request deals more with the type of items we would address in the comprehensive study versus a request to review changes in the duties of her job, therefore I don't believe I advised her to go through her supervisor to request a formal job audit.

An RFP for the classification and compensation study was issued in December of 2007 (one month following Sam's email). A contract was signed with Fox Lawson in February 2008 and work began in March 2008. The steering committee for the project determined that the pay philosophy and determination of the market, focus groups and completion of Job Analysis Questionnaires would be completed in 2008 and the classification and market survey would be completed in 2009. The second phase of the study was put on hold when the economy went south mid-year 2009 and pay for all employees was reduced by 3% effective January 1, 2010. After mid 2009, with the exception of two positions, no job audits or pay increases unrelated to proficiency were made. While you know the history of what occurred, I think it is important in relation to our response to Sam. Like other employees she's been told for several years that we are in the process of looking at her position and because of the timing of events, a long time has passed without a change.

Sam did complete a job analysis questionnaire in January 2009 in which she included an attachment that includes the same as the information in her letter. I believe she participated in the Communications and Marketing Panel discussion with the consultants held on February 11, 2009. My notes from that session do not confirm Sam's attendance but they do show that the items on Sam's request were discussed with the consultants and the other PIOs.

In this section I will discuss what has been done with regard to each of Sam's requests:

#### Benchmark

Sam had concerns about being benchmarked "against the Human Resources Analyst position" and that her position is not similar to the HR Analyst. The HR Analyst benchmark has been used to tie non-supervisory, degreed, professional, exempt positions to market. Because this approach has been confusing to employees, the new classification structure moves toward benchmarks that are related to a particular occupation. This was done at the request of the steering committee. In the new structure, the City Public Information Manager is the benchmark for the Marketing and Communications series of jobs.

#### · Level of work

The job description of the City Public Information Manager has been updated. Rich requested that the title Manager be used instead of the original proposed title of Coordinator due to the level of responsibility of the job in managing the overall communication function for the City. This change was made.

# Comparison to market

Sam requests that her position be compared to Denver and Colorado Springs due to the fact that they are only cities that compare to GJ in the number of television news stations. We have expanded the number of market cities used but Denver and Colorado Springs are not in our market and therefore data was not used from those cities. The benchmark data includes 9 comparable positions in our market.

## Recommendation

I am very sorry that Sam feels Human Resources has been unresponsive to her since 2007! That is certainly not our intention and I wish she would have talked to either of us about it before now. The process of implementing the new job descriptions and pay plan has been painfully slow for all of us, but it is due to circumstances beyond our control. I am pleased that we are able to roll-out the new job descriptions and classification structure this year and that we have a baseline survey of our new market. I look forward to the day when the financial condition of the City allows us to make changes to pay based on our new pay philosophy. My recommendation is that we meet with Sam, Rich and Laurie in person to communicate this information along with providing the written response that Laurie has requested.

## Hi Claudia and Laura,

I have been thinking about the following for a very long time. I would like to formally request that the compensation for the Public Information Officer group be assessed independently next year during the City's compensation study. In this group I include the Police PIO, Fire PIO, Public Works PIO, possibly the VCB PIO (although the responsibilities of that position do differ somewhat from the rest of the group), and myself. I have a few reasons for this request.

- We are currently benchmarked against the Human Resource Analyst position. I find almost no similarities between our positions and the HR Analyst's positions. Some of the more notable differences include that our jobs require responding to the media or to incidents at all hours, including on weekends and in the middle of the night; attending many late-night and weekend community or elected official meetings; and often being in a position to publicly speak (or not speak) about sensitive or controversial information or to defend the City's position or actions. Within this benchmark group, my particular position requires 5 years of previous experience. Every other position in the benchmark group, with the exception of the Environmental Compliance Regulation Coordinator, requires only 2 to 3 years of previous experience. Several of these positions are compensated equal to or greater than my position.
- We hold very visible positions and are entrusted with extremely important information. Due to the media exposure, many people in the community know who we are although we may not know who they are. We are often the message bearers and have the responsibility of "speaking on behalf of the organization" or "representing the organization", which at times can be a very heavy load to bear. The simplest of words can create a controversy, so the skill set required by these types of positions is extremely important. This creates a level of stress that I honestly believe very few other City employees have to contend with. Every time a media interview is conducted, we hold our breath in the hope that the accurate angle will be portrayed when the story comes out. Then the next day, we do it all over again.
- The majority of municipalities now have PIO's, so there should be existing data against which to benchmark our positions. The only caveat I would like to offer here is that Grand Junction is definitely different than most municipalities when it comes to media scrutiny and involvement. In Colorado, there are really only 2 communities that compare accurately to Grand Junction in terms of public information/media relations Denver and Colorado Springs. The reason for this is that Grand Junction is only the 3rd city in the state to have multiple network television news stations. Most cities don't have any, much less three of them, and this does create a very different scenario under which we must operate, not to mention the increase in the workload. In Grand Junction, as you know, the City is almost always in the news.

If there is a form I need to complete or some other formal step I must take in regard to this, please let me know. Also let me know if you have questions. Thanks for your understanding of this request.

# **Laura Conant - Re: Public Relations Director**

From:

"Sheryl Coffey" <Sheryl.Coffey@mesacounty.us>

To:

"Laura Conant" < laurac@ci.grandjct.co.us>

Date:

1/12/2012 11:41 AM

Subject:

Re: Public Relations Director **Attachments:** Public Relations Director.doc

Hi Laura ∼

I've attached the job description for you. The person currently holding this position is Jessica Peterson. She did have supervisory responsibility, but the one position she supervised was eliminated during the last round of budget cuts.

The salary range is \$52,068 - \$72,895. Her actual salary is \$70,000.

Please let me know if you need anything else.

>>> "Laura Conant" <laurac@ci.grandjct.co.us> 01/12/2012 11:36 AM >>> Sheryl -

I'm looking for some information on your Public Relations Director. Do you have a job description you could email me? I'm wondering if your position has any supervisory responsibility and what the incumbent's current actual pay is. Who is the current incumbent? Thanks for your help.

Laura



Job Title:

**Public Relations Director** 

Department:

Administration

Reports To:

**County Administrator** 

FLSA Status:

Exempt

**Driving Classification:** 

Marginal

Management:

Supervisory Responsibility

#### JOB SUMMARY:

Coordinates, establishes and maintains communication between the County and its various external and internal customers; serves as the main contact for citizens to voice complaints or concerns regarding county policies, procedures or staff. Develops and implements public relations plans, strategies, and public outreach and marketing programs to increase the visibility and presence of Mesa County, its departments and its board members.

### **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:**

(The following duty statements are illustrative of the essential functions of the job and do not include other non-essential or marginal duties that may be required. Mesa County reserves the right to modify or change the duties or essential functions of this job at any time. All responsibilities may not be performed by all incumbents.)

Acts as the Public Information Officer in situations that require press releases; answers questions concerning specific County functions; conducts media tours and press interviews; serves as a County spokesperson.

Analyzes communication needs for specific areas of Mesa County and develops and implements annual communication and outreach plans.

Coordinates the County's public relations activities to include recommendations regarding policies; provides public relations training and advice to county managers and supervisors. Develops and maintains a positive relationship with the media, and initiates media contacts as needed.

Oversees the County access cable television channel. Participate with Mesa State College in designing transmission of cable and UHF T.V. Establishes and coordinates interaction with all county departments and governmental agencies in developing audio/video production to promote, educate, and inform citizens of governmental programs.

Explore revenues to offset cable T.V. costs to the county.

Coordinates efforts with individual department Public Information Officers and those who are responsible for certain PIO functions within their department.

Works with the Mesa County Teen Leadership Commission as a facilitator and organizer.

Coordinates the Inside Mesa County class to teach citizens about their county government.

Coordinates and consults on publication of newsletters, brochure development, media contact and public education programs on behalf of the County. Ensures the content of the County web page is appropriate and current.

Assists with advertising for volunteers for Commissioner appointed boards and assists with the recruitment process.

Oral and written communications must be clear and effective.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

## **Education and Experience:**

Bachelor's degree in communications, public relations, business, journalism, public administration, or a related field and four (4) or more years of progressively responsible public communications experience

Any combination of education, training and experience which provides the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the job.

## PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

This position requires standing, stooping, sitting, bending, twisting, and lifting up to 10 pounds.

Work is generally confined to a standard office environment.

From:

Rich Englehart

To:

Shelley Caskey

CC:

Sam Rainguet

Date:

Monday - June 7, 2010 4:04 PM

Subject:

Re: City Public Information Coordinator Job Description

Attachments:

TEXT.htm (2095 bytes)

Shelley,

After meeting with Sam I would request the following considerations:

Due to Sam's current position and role on the leadership team and her position as it compares to the current division managers as well as what is more common among other communities our size, I would like to request a title change in the Job Description from City Public Information Coordinator to <u>City Communications Manager</u> I have some hand written suggestions to the description, not very many and not major. I will get those over to you.

I also reviewed the additional comments in the JAQ supplement #3 that was provided a while back. I agree that the PIO group is not properly benchmarked at this time. I would request that you revisit this if you have not already. I agree that the information submitted would support this request.

Please give me a call if you need additional information.

## Rich

>>> Shelley Caskey 5/28/2010 1:48 PM >>> Good afternoon Rich,

Attached are two memos regarding the rollout of job descriptions. One memo provides an overview for you and the other is to be given to each employee along with a copy of their job description.

The job description attached is for the City Public Information Coordinator.

Will you please discuss the description with Sam as outlined in the memo?

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your help.

Shelley

of Originally

JAQ Supplement #3

V. Employee, Supervisor and Department Head Signatures

Additional Comments

The "PIO" group is currently benchmarked against the Human Resource Analyst position. I find almost no similarities between the PIO positions and the HR Analyst's positions. Some of the more notable differences include that our jobs require responding to the media or to incidents at all hours, including on weekends and in the middle of the night; attending many late-night and weekend community or elected official meetings; and often being in a position to publicly speak (or not speak) about sensitive or controversial information or to defend the City's position or actions.

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