
Assembly Position Subcommittee Agenda

Monday, September 30, 2019 Noon
City Hall - 3RD Floor Conference Room

Subcommittee Members:

Steven Eisenbeisz, Valorie Nelson, and Dr. Richard Wein

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES**
- IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD – for any item off the agenda *(not to exceed 3 minutes)***
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. September 16, 2019
- VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (None)**
- VII. NEW BUSINESS**
 - B. Review of vacant positions:
 - 1. Assessor
- VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD – for any item on or off the agenda *(not to exceed 3 minutes)***
- IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Assembly Position Subcommittee Minutes

Monday, September 16, 2019 Noon
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Subcommittee Members:
Steven Eisenbeisz, Valorie Nelson, and Dr. Richard Wein

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eisenbeisz called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Subcommittee Members Present: Steven Eisenbeisz; Dr. Richard Wein.

Subcommittee Members Absent: Valorie Nelson (excused)

Others in attendance: KCAW Katherine Rose; Interim Municipal Administrator/Public Works Director Michael Harmon; Fire Chief Dave Miller; Maintenance and Operations Superintendent Harold Greene; Building, Grounds, and Parks Supervisor Michael Colliver; Deputy Clerk Melissa Henshaw

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

None.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*not to exceed 3 minutes*)

Richard Wein spoke to oil prices and the importance of keeping track of them.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 19, 2019

A motion was made by Wein to approve the minutes of August 19, 2019. The motion PASSED by the following vote:

Yes: 2 – Wein and Eisenbeisz

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Review of vacant positions:

1. Library Director

Eisenbeisz noted that turn over for this position seemed high. Harmon stated he would meet with Library staff this week to determine an interim. Wein stated the position was needed and noted the job description required a Masters in Library Sciences which may be difficult to fill. He felt the library was a key organization in performing services to the public.

Eisenbeisz suggested a change in the job description to include equivalent experience. Harmon saw flexibility in the job description.

A motion was made by Wein to recommend to the Assembly to hire a Library Director. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 2 – Wein and Eisenbeisz

2. Electric Utility Director

Eisenbeisz would like to advertise for this position as soon as possible. Wein agreed and felt it would be a difficult position to fill at a difficult time and listed the great costs of projects. Eisenbeisz stated the Assembly had received a letter of interest from an individual for the interim position.

Eisenbeisz hoped to have a discussion at the Assembly meeting of hiring an interim. Harmon noted he had had a meeting with one individual and there was no one who had expressed interest in being the interim within the department. He indicated that this position would be challenging to fill an interim from within the department and that outside support may be needed. He stated the importance of finding an experienced electrical engineer who had experience of managing electrical projects.

A motion was made by Eisenbeisz to recommend to the Assembly hiring an Electric Utility Director. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 2 – Eisenbeisz and Wein

3. Fire Chief

Eisenbeisz noted the need to have the position filled. Wein believes that it could be filled within the department and agreed that it needed to be filled. Eisenbeisz thought it a good idea to advertise prior to the current Fire Chief's departure.

Miller stated he would retire in the next 6 to 7 months.

A motion was made by Eisenbeisz to recommend to the Assembly hiring a Fire Chief. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 2 – Eisenbeisz and Wein

4. Assistant Fire Chief

Eisenbeisz wondered of any budget constraints and noted this position was eliminated. He told of the Sitka General Code section 2.20 in which an Assistant Fire Chief was listed and stated either the Code needed to be changed or there needed to be the hiring of an Assistant Fire Chief. Wein thought the Code could be changed from "shall" to "may". He stated this was a new full time equivalent (FTE) which also needed approval of the

Assembly and was not in support. He wondered how to pay for the position. Harmon spoke in favor of the position. He felt that the current Fire Chief was untraditional, very involved, and spent many hours' day and night at work. He noted the need for this position for continuity within the department.

Miller stated that calls were up 85 to 90 more than at this time last year. He told that he filled in many extra hours to avoid overtime costs. He spoke to the tasks not being accomplished without the Assistant Fire Chief position. Eisenbeisz informed he was a volunteer at the Fire Hall and commented that the Assembly had previously declared no conflict. Wein agreed. He felt the position was vital. Harmon noted that the Fire Marshall position was currently housed/under the Public Works department and wondered if there were an Assistant Fire Chief if it could be put back under the Fire Hall. He stated the importance of the position during emergency situations.

A motion was made by Eisenbeisz to recommend to the Assembly hiring an Assistant Fire Chief. The motion FAILED by the following vote.

Yes: 1 –Eisenbeisz

No: 1 – Wein

5. Fire Engineer

Eisenbeisz explained that there is a Fire Engineer that is expected to go to work for the Sitka Police Department and therefore, there would be a vacancy. Miller stated there was a seasonal employee that could fill the vacancy. Harmon supported maintaining current staffing levels. Eisenbeisz noted that overtime could add up with lower staffing levels.

A motion was made by Eisenbeisz to recommend to the Assembly to hire a Fire Engineer only if a vacancy occurs within the next month. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 1 – Wein and Eisenbeisz

6. Grounds Maintenance Specialist

Eisenbeisz questioned the title switch from a supervisor to a specialist, noted the job description had discrepancies and questioned the transition of the retiring employee. Colliver explained the position was changed to focus on the rotation plans which would be similar to the building maintenance structure. He stated the two positions would be a team with a lead but not a supervisor. Harmon elaborated that there should be a budget savings and there would be two peer positions with the structure change. He stated the position would be downgraded from a supervisor to a specialist.

Eisenbeisz noted that the reorganization would not create a new FTE and that this was a job re-classification. Harmon would make sure that ASEA was aware.

A motion was made by Eisenbeisz to recommend to the Assembly to hire a Grounds Maintenance Specialist. The motion PASSED by the following vote.

Yes: 2 – Wein and Eisenbeisz

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Richard Wein commented on the use of the tennis courts.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Eisenbeisz adjourned the meeting at 12:52 p.m.

Attest: Melissa Henshaw, CMC
Deputy Clerk

DRAFT

City and Borough of Sitka

Recruitment Information for September 30, 2019 Subcommittee

Position	Department	Date of Vacancy	Grade/ Union	Salary Range (Matrix A-O) Union vacancy (current pay)	Full Time (F/T) Part-Time (PT) Seasonal (S)	Notes
Assessor	Assessing	Next couple of months	Grade 36	\$86,132 to \$121,680	F/T Exempt	Resignation of Assessor in the near future. Request to fill vacancy, approve advertising, and approve hiring Wendy as a temp on an as needed basis.

ITEM AGENDA FOR SUBCOMMITTEE POSITION MEETING

September 30, 2019

Requested Position submitted by:

Department: Assessing

Supervisor: Michael Harmon, Interim Administrator

Department Head: Wendy Lawrence, Assessing Director

Information about proposed position:

Job Title: Assessor

New Position? ___ Yes ___XX___ No

Existing position to replace vacancy ___XX___ Yes ___ No

Date existing position became/becomes open: **To be Determined**

Justification for this request: **Wendy Lawrence will be resigning as Assessor. Authorization is sought from the Subcommittee to approve recruitment for the position of Assessor and allow Wendy Lawrence to provide assistance in training the new Assessor.**

Additional information helpful for consideration: **Wendy Lawrence is attaching to this subcommittee packet a proposal for consideration.**

Wendy Lawrence
Department Head

9/25/19
Date

Please route this request to Sharon Joseph at Human Resources by **NOON** on Tuesday, September 24.



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Paxton and Assembly Members
Michael Harmon, Interim Municipal Administrator
Sharon Joseph, Human Resources Assistant

From: Wendy Lawrence, Assessing Director

Date: February 26, 2019

Subject: Assessing Department Succession Planning

Planning for the succession of a new Assessor should begin as soon as possible and shall be initiated by this official statement of my intent to depart this position. The establishment of a succession plan will determine my departure date.

Succession planning is key because there are significant projects currently in process that will bring the entire tax base to market value for Tax Year 2020. The primary project being a complete revaluation of all parcels to market value utilizing mass-appraisal modeling, and secondly a complete revaluation and application review of the Community Purpose Exemption program for your review later this year. Stopping either one of these projects at this time would be detrimental to your tax base and hugely problematic for the assessing staff and taxpayers.

The financial challenges we face as a city are significant and restoring the tax base to market value should be a top priority given the economic outlook. The Assessing Department's work product accounts for approximately 25% of the General Fund Revenue, and bringing all properties to market value is expected to generate conservatively at least \$7,000,000 annually in revenue at the current 6 mills. More importantly, once all properties are at market value, there will be taxation equities between like properties.

Option 1: I can remain in my capacity as the Assessor working remotely, and on-site as needed, until the Tax Year 2020 valuation and the Community Purpose Exemption review are complete, with a no-later-than departure date of March 15, 2020, or until an Assessor is hired and feels comfortable taking over the revaluation process. This option will afford the time it may require to hire a new Assessor, will allow time for transition overlap for the new Assessor, will ensure assessing staff are fully supported through a full market revaluation, and will allow for the full revaluation to happen.

Option 2: I can accommodate a 30-day departure notice and simply finish out what projects I am able prior to. This option could be accommodated but would not be ideal as hiring an Assessor

mid-stream of an established revaluation without any overlap can be done, but the process would be very challenging for the Assessor, the assessing staff and taxpayers.

In any event, it is highly recommended that you hire a qualified Assessor as soon as possible, in addition to at least two temporary administrative positions for the Tax Year 2020 appeal period of March through May in anticipation of the first full market value revaluation in over sixteen years. You may also want to appoint a Board of Equalization of qualified laypersons who are knowledgeable about real estate and valuations, as you may have many more appeals than the typical 150 that occur each year. Appointment of a lay-board will require the establishment of standard procedures and regulations via ordinance, and the eventual appointment of Board Members.

The Assessing Department has typically managed on average 150 valuation inquiries each year, and has historically resolved 99% of those during the informal appeal period of March 15th to April 15th, with historically very few unresolved appeals reaching your purview for the official Board of Equalization hearing typically held the first Monday in May. This is not expected to be the case this coming year, given the projects at hand. Your case load as the current Board of Equalization may increase, and as such you have the authority to appoint a lay board and hearing procedures to better manage this process and allow all parties to know what to expect. The Board of Equalization process is a quasi-judicial process guided by statutory regulations, and should be framed by outlined best-practice procedures. The City and Borough of Sitka currently has no formal BOE procedure in place; it has followed customary procedures that have been outlined by the State Assessor's Office and those established as best-practices in the industry but these have not yet been codified. It is highly recommended that this project be undertaken as well by the new Assessor.

City and Borough Sitka, Alaska

Class Specification

Class Title	Assessor
Class Code Number	2170
FLSA Designation	Exempt (Administrative)
Pay Grade and Range	36
Effective Date	November 2014

General Statement of Duties

Under the general direction of the Administrator, the Assessor is responsible for planning, organizing and directing an effective and efficient program for the continual assessment of property in the City and Borough. Provide for consistent application of State statutes and City and Borough ordinances relative to the appraisal process.

Distinguishing Features of the Class

The principal function of an employee in this class is to plan, organize and direct the appraisal and assessment functions. The work is performed under the direct supervision of the Administrator but extensive leeway is granted for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative. Responsible for the overall direction of the department employees, including but not limited to hiring, training, discipline, and employee evaluation. The nature of the work performed requires that an employee in this class establish and maintain effective working relationships with other Department and City employees, contractors, agencies and other taxing jurisdictions and the public. The principal duties of this class are performed in a general office work environment and an outdoor environment that may involve adverse weather conditions and related hazards.

Examples of Essential Work (Illustrative Only)

- Plans, organizes and directs all necessary activities to accomplish field and office appraisals of real and personal property, property assessment and notification to taxpayers of assessed values;
- Measures and inspects real property, observes construction, building and land data and photographs real property;
- Analyzes and adjusts cost basis manuals and applies cost basis data to appraised properties;
- Collects and confirms sales comparison data and applies sales comparison data to appraised properties;
- Certifies the tax roll and notifies taxpayers of assessed values of property;
- Performs re-inspections as necessary and as required by code;
- Oversees the preparation of real and personal property tax declaration mailings;
- Reviews and audits personal and business property declarations;
- Performs tideland lease price determination;
- Compiles appraisal and assessment data for the Board of Equalization;
- Testifies before the Board of Equalization as necessary;

- Directs the answering of citizen, agency and other jurisdiction inquiries regarding property description, property ownership, assessments and assessment policies and procedures;
- Performs ratio studies and statistical justification for quality control;
- Develops and maintains departmental budget;
- Oversees the preparation of all required state reports;
- Keeps immediate supervisor and designated others fully and accurately informed concerning work progress, including present and potential work problems and suggestions for new or improved ways of addressing such problems;
- Attends meetings, conferences, workshops and training sessions and reviews publications and audio-visual materials to become and remain current on the principles, practices and new developments in assigned work areas;
- Responds to citizens' questions and comments in a courteous and timely manner;
- Trains, assigns, prioritizes, supervises, motivates and evaluates the work of assigned employees;
- Communicates and coordinates regularly with appropriate others to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of interdepartmental operations and activities;
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of real and personal property appraisals;
- Comprehensive knowledge of mass appraisal tax assessment practices and policies;
- Thorough knowledge of legal land description platting and mapping techniques;
- Proficient use of Marshall & Swift residential and commercial cost estimators;
- Ability to gather analyze and maintain accurate real and personal property data;
- Ability to communicate well with others, both orally and in writing, using both technical and non-technical language;
- Ability to understand and follow oral and/or written policies, procedures and instructions;
- Ability to prepare and present accurate and reliable reports containing findings and recommendations;
- Ability to operate or quickly learn to operate a personal computer using standard or customized software applications appropriate to assigned tasks;
- Ability to use logical and creative thought processes to develop solutions according to written specifications and/or oral instructions;
- Ability to perform a wide variety of duties and responsibilities with accuracy and speed under the pressure of time-sensitive deadlines;
- Ability and willingness to quickly learn and put to use new skills and knowledge brought about by rapidly changing information and/or technology;
- Integrity, ingenuity and inventiveness in the performance of assigned tasks.

Acceptable Experience and Training

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent in Business Administration, Economics or related field;
- Considerable experience in real and personal property appraisal, customer service and supervision;
or
- Any equivalent combination of experience, education and training which provides the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform the work.

Required Special Qualifications

- Ability to obtain the designation of Alaska Certified Assessor Appraiser Level 3 within 18 months of hire and maintain thereafter.
- Possess and maintain of a valid driver's license issued by the State of Alaska.

Essential Physical Abilities

- Sufficient clarity of speech and hearing or other communication capabilities, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to communicate well with citizens and other employees both over the telephone and in person;
 - Sufficient vision or other powers of observation, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to inspect and evaluate real and personal property and to produce and review a wide variety of written reports and other materials in both hard copy and electronic form;
 - Sufficient manual dexterity with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to perform real and personal property measurement and inspection and to operate a computer keyboard;
 - Sufficient personal mobility and physical reflexes, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to monitor and supervise department operations, to visit and inspect facilities and construction sites in all weather conditions and to attend meetings at various locations.
- • • END • • •