

Personnel Requests:
2018 Budget

Position Justification/Description of Duties

Administrative Assistant – Administration - NEW

Position Justification:

- The number, size, and popularity of **City run events** has grown tremendously over the last five years and residents have come to expect well executed events that show the City's commitment to its residents, businesses and families. These events promote citizen engagement and community image which are both discussed in the City's strategic plan. At the same time, the City's ability to recruit new volunteers and new donations for events has plateaued, placing an increased demand on City staff.
- The **City's communications efforts** have also grown which includes defining and promoting the Ramsey Brand and all-purpose marketing efforts with an emphasis on social media. Additionally, as technology, media devices, and social media continue to advance, the demand for staff dedicated to modern/ timely communications has increased year-after-year, for all organizations. This trend is consistent for the City of Ramsey.
- Currently both of these roles (city run events and communications) fall primarily on one staff person; the Public Information and Events Specialist (and the supporting administrative intern). The volume of work for this one position is becoming unmanageable and is not meeting expectations.
- The request to add one fulltime administrative assistant would be partially offset by the elimination of the annual administrative intern (currently, full time for six months). While the administrative intern has been helpful in the past, there is a great deal of inefficiency that falls back to regular staff, including: recruitment time and cost, training time and costs, onboarding and IT costs, followed by a brief period of productive time on the job, followed by separation from the City employment after just 67 or 100 days on the job, and the potential for an unemployment claim from the State. Internships are limited to either 67 or 100 days on the job due to Minnesota Statute 179A, Public Employment Labor Relations.
- The current staffing for City run events and communications (1 FT plus 1 intern) also exposes the City to the risk of being unable to recover from staff turnover. In the event that the Public Information and Event Specialist leaves the City, or goes on a significant leave, a trained back up does not exist. Considering the standard in which the City's events and communications are currently operating at (and continue to increase each year), not having a plan in place to address turnover is a major risk. Having at least one full time employee in place, trained on events and communications, will address this concern.

- The city's newly adopted strategic plan calls for more emphasis on pro-active/ consistent communication efforts, improved brand/image, and more public engagement. Hiring this position will open up time for the existing Public Information & Event Specialist to focus on these strategic initiatives. Examples:
 - Become more involved and proactive with the Ramsey Resident, including refreshing articles, improving layouts, more editing, and creating new/ stimulating content (city is currently reactive).
 - Become more proactive with social media, including more frequent and proactive posts (city is currently reactive). Additionally, city will consider implementing other social media options, such as Twitter.
 - Work with the city's Emergency Operations Coordinator and IT Manager to develop a streamlined crisis communications system (reference the communication challenges with the Blaine water crisis in 2017). Serve as the official emergency public information officer (current emergency communications plan has opportunity for improvement).
 - Provide general oversight and management of the look and feel of the city's website, from a high level communications perspective. Additionally, take a proactive approach to ensure we are maximizing the potential of our website, and keeping it updated (city is currently reactive).
 - Allow more time for speech writing, note creation, and content creation for Council/ Commission members participating in events, presentations, or interviews whom need assistance from staff.
 - Have ability to aid various department heads with their communication efforts (special projects that have major communication/ event components, including projects listed in the strategic plan).
 - Have ability to be more involved with ad-hoc projects, events, and targeted communication pieces (several requests made to administration department annually, including requests from Council and various Commissions).
 - Attend training as needed to allow for continuous improvement and use of best practices from communications industry (city is currently reactive).

Description of Duties:

This new position will replace the existing Administrative Intern position. The purpose of this position is to support the existing Public Information and Event Specialist (act as an assistant). Both positions will complement each other. This new position will act as the primary for events, and will provide support for communications. The existing Public Information and Event Specialist position will primarily focus on communications, and will provide support on events. However, because communications and events have a great deal of overlap, it is very likely these two staff members will act as a team. The existing Public Information and Event Specialist staff person will supervise this new position, and will still remain responsible for high level coordination of events.

The new Administrative Assistant will primarily focus on event administration/ coordination, event communication/ materials, event execution (set-up, day-of, and take-down), event registration/ correspondence to participants, and event committee coordination, etc.

- Example events: Happy Days, EDA Expo, EDA Golf Tourney, EDA Networking Event, Anoka Broker Event, Holiday Party, Tree Lighting Ceremony, PACT Charter Tour, supplemental support for various Parks & Recreation Events (Draw Event Series, Park & Recreation programming), and various ad hoc events (i.e. Highway 10 related, groundbreakings, etc.).

Public Information & Event Specialist to Communications Coordinator – Admin - Reclasp

- See Administrative Assistant request for details and justification. This request is complementary.
- The existing Public Information & Event Specialist will now have an expanded supervisory role and an expanded communications role (including becoming the official emergency Public Information Officer, and oversight of various communication pieces). Additionally, the existing Public Information & Event Specialist now has over three years' experience with the City, and has developed considerable institutional knowledge, and various work efficiencies. This position is now taking on a "Communications Coordinator" role. As a result, a reclass is being requested. This will adjust the wage for this position to be at the median for like positions within the metro.

IT Technician Increase from 29 hours to 40 hours week – Data Processing - Hour Increase

- The IT department's role is an invisible one at the City of Ramsey. We maintain computers, software and systems, which allow fellow staff to do their role effectively every workday. We also strive to improve the technologies we have and add new ones in order to facilitate efficient and effective government services.
- The City's IT Department currently responds to well over 1,500 documented service requests annually. That number doesn't include the dozens of walk-in and phone-in requests received daily. Our current count for desktops is 170 and the device count is 69.
- Some of projects in 2016 included: total replacement of all City firewalls, added malware endpoint protection to City computers (most Logis cities will be following this example in coming years), fitted a new squad car, Fire Station 2 support, online fillable forms on the website, utilities data collection tablet, updated police scheduling software (allowing PD staff to view schedules from home), and fitted dozens of cubicles and offices with sit/stand stations.

- With how busy 2016 was, we are already making great strides in 2017. We've already implemented new malicious website blocking software and network analysis software through Logis. These new implementations will significantly lower Ramsey's risk of malicious activity, and, actually saved the City money when looking at the website monitoring software licensing annual costs. On the horizon we have a server replacement this year, audio/visual improvements, as well as the very significant website redesign.
- Demand on the I.T. Department is growing fast. We are seeing an increased demand from our facilities (new buildings, smart room rentals, park rentals), increased employee counts, increased event AV support, an increased demand for better website offerings, and an increased demand on other I.T. Technologies (phones, tablets, and other devices).
- The City did reach out to neighboring communities, and similarly situated cities across the metro, to see how many full-time-equivalent I.T. staff they employed. As you could expect, the answers were widely varying for a number of reasons, depending on what services are being provided, and how the City approaches providing said services. Responses: Andover: 1, Blaine 4, Coon Rapids 4, Elk River 3, Oakdale 1-3, Roseville 4-5, and Savage 2.5. Ramsey currently has 1.6 F.T.E.s operating I.T. This request is to increase that number to 2.0.
- This request for increasing I.T. hours from 1.6 to 2.0 F.T.E. has been needed for several years. However, staff recognized the City was still recovering from the great recession until recently, and attempted to push this request out as far as possible. Additional hours within the I.T. Department are needed to accommodate the growing needs of the City, and maintain the level of service Ramsey IT is known to provide, while striving to continue to improve City services.
- Lastly, this position will also play a key role in the support and implementation of the City's new website. This position was included in the past 5-year budget. Having a second F.T.E. will provide Ramsey with a trained back up staff person, ready to step in, in the event of staff turn over, or staff leave.

Senior Planner – Community Development - NEW

The Senior Planner addresses current workload for land use and zoning applications. The position will also implement Strategic Plan initiatives to clean up Highway 10 and improve the image of key nodes and corridors through an incentive-based approach to planning and implementation. The Senior Planner will also be the City's housing and neighborhood resource expert, connect our residential community to available resources. The Senior Planner will also assume leadership to the Planning Team, allowing the City Planner to provide more time to environmental initiatives as approved in addition to zoning administration roles.

Fire Inspector/Life Safety Educator– Fire – NEW

The Fire Department staffing levels have not increased since 2004. Since that time, we have seen increases in calls for service and city growth with the addition of residential/commercial properties. This position will assist with the City's strategic initiative of improving the safety of the community and also gain personnel credit to ultimately lower our ISO classification rating. This position will be responsible for conducting code compliance inspections, performing preplanning activities and responding to emergencies as a firefighter. This position will also be responsible for developing and implementing fire and life safety education programs. Work includes preparing and presenting fire prevention and fire safety education programs, initiating and maintaining partnerships and communications with schools, community groups, and businesses; developing brochures and educational materials for public distribution.

Administrative Assistant – Engineering - NEW

This position will assist with various administrative duties the City Engineer currently completes, and will provide coverage for administrative assistants from other departments. Duties will include website administration and updates; preparation and mailing of letters, memos, and notices; Asset Management Program administration; Special Assessments program administration; meeting minutes; document filing and scanning; and covering desks and phones for administrative assistants from other departments.

Park Maintenance Worker – Park & Rec - NEW

This position would bring the park department back to the 2008 staffing level. This position would also be part of our snow removal program. In the past we have tried to fill the gap with seasonal help and a new 7 month position that was created with the help of the AFSCME union. With the current job market seasonal help is in high demand. Seasonal recruiting has become difficult and seasonal employees can only accomplish so many tasks because of restrictions on equipment operations and licensure requirements. While the park department starts spring cleanup and prepping athletic fields in April, most of our seasonal help starts in late May and leaves in mid August. The demand holds true in the Fall when we are working on athletic fields until late October. In the past 10 years demands for park maintenance have increased. Projects and maintenance that we have deferred action on are coming to the forefront, such as boardwalk repairs, aging playgrounds, trail maintenance, tree removal, etc. City sponsored events such as Happy Days and the Draw Concert Series are requiring more manhours from PW staff as well. This position would fall under Strategic Imperative III: "Smart, Citizen Focused Government" in our Strategic Action Plan

Recreational Assistant – Park & Rec - NEW

Duties range from coordination of all Ramsey's recreation programs and The Draw Summer Event Series, as well as assisting the parks department with myriad administrative support tasks.