



# MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**DATE:** June 2, 2015

**REGULAR \$\$**

**ITEM #:** 12

**AGENDA ITEM:** Consolidation of Taxpayer Relations Coordinator / Receptionist into One Position – Communications Coordinator

**SUBMITTED BY:** Dean A. Zuleger, City Administrator

**THROUGH:** Dean A. Zuleger, City Administrator

**REVIEWED BY:** Adam Bell, Clerk/ Asst. Administrator

**SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

- Introduction of Item ..... City Administrator
- Report/Presentation.....City Administrator
- Questions from Council to Staff..... Mayor Facilitates
- Public Input, if Appropriate ..... Mayor Facilitates
- Call for Motion ..... Mayor & City Council
- Discussion..... Mayor & City Council
- Action on Motion..... Mayor Facilitates

**POLICY RECOMMENDER:** City Administrator

**FISCAL IMPACT:** \$38,000 in Salary / \$25,081.80 in Benefits. Resulting in a savings of \$59,955.27 (per statistics provided by the Finance Director).

**SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:** To fill the opening of 2 full time positions (Receptionist / Taxpayer Relations Coordinator) by consolidating/realigning 70% of the duties into one new position – Communications Coordinator. 30% of the duties will be transferred to current employees. *NOTE: The Parks Commission is on record as supporting the filling of the Taxpayer Relations Coordinator.* The motion for this action is as follows:

***“Move to consolidate the Receptionist and Taxpayer Relations Coordinator into one new position entitled Communications Coordinator assuming/realigning 70% of the previous responsibilities and transitioning 30% of the remaining across five other positions thus saving \$59,955.27. The City Council grants the City Administrator/City Clerk to begin to recruit the position at an annual salary of \$38,000 plus benefits.”***

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The City of Lake Elmo currently has two openings in critical areas – Receptionist & Taxpayer Relations Coordinator – that have implications for the City’s positive interaction with taxpayers. After careful review of duties, it has been determined that these positions can be consolidated into one full-time position with the hiring of the right individual. This position would assume 70% of the duties of both positions mainly in the communications portion of the job with the remaining 30% of the duties distributed between the Administrator (Parks Program – Media Liaison), City Clerk/Assistant Administrator (Cable TV – Next Generation), Deputy Clerk (4<sup>th</sup> Ring & Phone Backup – Website Support), Planner (Website Support) and Planning Assistant (Building Inspector Scheduling/Form Creation for Building Inspector/3<sup>rd</sup> Phone Ring). The proposal assumes the elimination of the de facto special events coordinator role that was handled by the Taxpayer Relations Coordinator.

A full job description and personality profile (PRO) will be developed after the Council determines that this is the role it wishes to pursue. Some of the responsibilities of this position will be:

- General Receptionist (1<sup>st</sup> and 2 Ring Responsibility) / Mail Clerk
- Facebook Page Administrator (3-4 posts per week)
- Assembly of Fresh Weekly Newsletter
- General City Public Relations
- Assembly of Source Quarterly Newsletter
- Website Support for Clerk’s Office / Engineer / Building Inspector
- Program Support for Park Commission (inc. Minutes via DVD)
- Council Packet Assembly / Duplication
- Administrative Support for the City Administrator / Director of Public Works.

The position will be allowed 2-3 hours per day of non-front desk time to execute taxpayer communication duties. The position will be located at the front desk of City Hall.

It had been suggested that this position could be staffed by volunteers, after review it has been determined that due to the nature of the position in relation to the MN Data Practices act, the work should be performed by FTE staff for proper review and disciplinary purposes. HR Chair Julie Fliflet does concur with the City Administrator in consolidating these positions into one full-time position and is supportive of this realignment provided the right individual can be recruited.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION (SWOT):**

**Strengths:** Provides a cost savings of \$59,955.27 and creates a single interest point of entry for taxpayers. Properly redistributes some of the receptionist service to the Building Inspector back to the Planning Assistant;

**Weakness:** Assigns 30% workload to an already stretched staff. Removal of direct clerical support from the Administrative Offices;

**Opportunities:** Cross-training and better overlap coverage with one central point of access for public at City Hall. Better synergy between Planning Assistant and Building Official;

**Threats:** Disjointed / added responsibilities may cause a drop off in service or delays in taxpayer communication vehicles or program support. Staff burn-out.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

*“Move to consolidate the Receptionist and Taxpayer Relations Coordinator into one new position entitled Communications Coordinator assuming/realigning 70% of the previous responsibilities and transitioning 30% of the remaining across five other positions thus saving \$59,955.27. The City Council grants the City Administrator/City Clerk to begin to recruit the position at an annual salary of \$38,000 plus benefits.”*