

CITY OF RICHMOND, CA
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DEPT.

PERSONNEL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING

HRM CONFERENCE ROOM
1401 MARINA WAY SOUTH

MAY 22, 2008
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Grove at 4:36 p.m. Roll call was as follows:

Present: Kisha Grove, Vice Chairperson
Jodi Lines, Board Member
Kimberly Stewart, Board Member

Absent: Lewis West, Chairperson
Joanne Sidwell, Board Member

In Audience: Leslie T. Knight, Asst. City Manager/Human Resources Mgmt. Dir.
Andy Russo, Principal Personnel Analyst, HRM
Donna Newton, Personnel Analyst II, HRM
Maria Blue, Personnel Analyst II, HRM
Pam Covington, Representative, IFPTE Local 21
Tim Jones, Housing Authority Director, Housing Authority
Lisa Carter, Personnel Board Secretary, HRM

1. APPROVAL TO REVISE/RETITLE THE EXISTING CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION FOR HOUSING OPERATIONS MANAGER (RICHMOND HOUSING AUTHORITY)

Donna Newton, Personnel Analyst II, provided a brief overview of the proposed item stating that staff is requesting the title be changed from the Housing Operations Manager to Housing Asset Manager which is in response to a new mandate by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that Housing Authorities adopt an asset management model for low income public housing. This is common practice in the private sector, and generally, the Housing Authority must provide services, track costs and performance standards, and request funding for each project.

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One requirement of this mandate is for an individual to be designated as an Asset Manager. The change in the title will make it clear to HUD that the City is compliant with their mandates and that the City will also inform HUD of the person serving in the position.

Staff is also asking for approval of revisions made to the job specification, some of which include revising the definition, class characteristics, and addition of duties. Originally, the position did not require experience; however, given the level and degree of responsibility, a requirement for experience has been added and changes are called out in the proposed specification.

Board Member Lines stated that she was happy to see the experience level added given that the Housing Authority is federally subsidized and there is sensitivity with the work.

Vice Chairperson Grove voiced concern with the change stating that before there were minimum qualifications for this type of job and now the requirement "jumps" to someone required to have a four-year degree and five years of experience. She questioned why the drastic change, asked if it was a mandate by HUD, or whether it mirrored other cities and/or county HUD departments.

Tim Jones, Housing Authority Director, responded and said that most housing authorities now take an easier task at compliance. They outsource property management to private sector companies. Most housing authorities that cannot comply are shutting down their buildings. The reason for the "large jump" is that before they moved to an asset management model, the position that was currently responsible for taking care of the accounting primarily was a property manager. Now, asset management provides individual project budgets, and this person needs to review pro formas, monitor expenditures in accordance with budgeted amounts, determine differences between tax credit and Section 8 accounting and units. This is what a private sector asset manager does now. What is also pushing this change is an FHA loan, where large developments are managed (that has a federal subsidy). Consequently, there will be occupancy reviews conducted by HUD.

Mr. Jones provided examples of questions asked by HUD and said that these tasks were never really required of the person in this position before. Therefore, the Asset Manager position must be the combination of a property manager and a finance person. He further discussed the extensive work undertaken by asset management, HUD requirements, and additional mandates for the current year, which must be accomplished by the Asset Manager. He agreed that the position has a huge job responsibility from what was required of the position presently to what will now be required. Staff argued this point to HUD, but they remained firm in their requirements and regulations.

Vice Chairperson Grove thanked Mr. Jones for his explanation of this which addressed many of her concerns.

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Pam Covington, Local 21, objected to the proposed change from the Housing Operations Manager to Housing Asset Manager. This is a Local 21 position, but Local 21 received a layoff notice today in the department for the Senior Property Manager. They are also concerned as to why there is now a change, as the last revision was made in 2003.

Vice Chairperson Grove asked if the person who received the layoff notice was directly affected by this position. Ms. Covington said that the position would perform some of the property manager duties of the Asset Property Manager, but the employee is being displaced and this is why they object.

Mr. Jones explained that there is an entire move in going towards the asset management model as stated earlier. The duties and responsibilities are more comprehensive. However, with this new change, the position will become more asset management focused and not only take on property management duties but also financial duties. Regarding the layoff notice, he said that this is the first fiscal year that the Housing Authority has been in a situation where their layoffs are not exorbitant. Federal funding cuts have been coming on a regular basis. The Housing Authority receives nothing from the General Fund and they must tighten their belt. He provided examples directly related to the need for the request, reiterated the Authority's cuts in federal funding, and unsustainability of the position.

Vice Chairperson Grove questioned whether there is a vacancy or is there someone in the position. Mr. Jones said that this position cannot be occupied by a Local 21 employee. Ms. Grove said the Board is being asked to revise the title of the existing position. In terms of the requirements of HUD, she thinks it is appropriate, and appreciates Mr. Jones' explanation. Vice Chairperson Grove questioned and confirmed that Local 21 can request a copy of the HUD mandate, which Mr. Jones presented. She also confirmed that the position manages only low income housing, finances, and eligibility intake operations for two programs.

Vice Chairperson Grove said that it sounds like the new position will leave a hole, and Mr. Russo noted that the current position is an Operations Manager who is over a lot of these programs. The additional duties are actually adding to the regular existing duties this individual has, so it is expanding their duties because of the mandate. Ms. Grove said leaving a hole can also be created by this person taking on these other responsibilities. She questioned what happens to the responsibilities she/he is no longer responsible for. Mr. Jones said this position has fewer duties but they are more complex, which he briefly described.

Ms. Covington interjected, stating that they met with staff last year regarding layoffs. There were two positions from Local 21 where this position absorbed some of that work. This is the concern now; the revised position will absorb even more. Mr. Jones said that there was another Local 21 position which was added at that time. He added that every

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property has a Resident Manager, Case Workers and Building Trade Workers, and this person manages those people. He said that the Council asked him to consider straight-lining his operations and to address those positions that provide direct client service to participants, and the person over these workers should be an Asset Manager. He provided further reasoning for the request.

Vice Chairperson Grove thanked Mr. Jones for his thorough explanation on the matter. She clarified with Mr. Jones that he would recruit for the position if the reclassification was approved.

Mr. Russo noted that federal funds fluctuate and it depends on the amount of monies that is released which has an impact on Housing Authority programs.

Ms. Covington stated that given the fluctuation in funding, if the department is not up to a certain level and it gets 'dinged,' funding gets cut. She asked how this comes into play when layoffs occur and there is not an adequate staffing level to maintain the workload and HUD requirements. Mr. Jones referred to the Multi-Change Characteristic System (MCCS) and that each Authority must submit detailed information. He commented on the department's income coming in, interest earnings, occupancy rates, and said that they must streamline operations and costs in order to sustain operations, and he hopes for a future cushion.

Vice Chairperson Grove made a motion to revise/retitle the existing classification specification for Housing Operations Manager in the Richmond Housing Authority; Board Member Lines seconded. Item failed by the following vote: AYES: Ms. Lines and Ms. Grove. ABSTAIN: Ms. Stewart. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ms. Sidwell and Mr. West.

2. APPROVAL TO ESTABLISH THE NEW CLASSIFICATION OF LOW INCOME PUBLIC HOUSING ASSET SPECIALIST (RICHMOND HOUSING AUTHORITY)

Donna Newton, Personnel Analyst II, provided a brief overview of the proposed item stating that this proposal relates again to the need for the department to comply with the new mandate by HUD. The position will play an important role in maintaining records, files and documents needed to track activities in the Low Income Public Housing section, as well as other responsibilities, which she briefly described. Ms. Newton noted that HUD would be closely reviewing the department's documentation. The position will require two years of clerical administrative experience in a public housing authority or a property management company, and the classification specification is included in the packet.

Board Member Lines recognized staff's desire to hire people with experience in low income housing and property management and hoped this could be accomplished. Mr.

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Jones voiced confidence and noted that the position originally began as an Office Assistant II and that responsibilities had been added over the years.

Vice Chairperson Grove made a motion to approve the new classification of Low Income Public Housing Asset Specialist in the Richmond Housing Authority; Board Member Stewart seconded. Item was approved by the following vote: AYES: Ms. Lines, Ms. Stewart, and Ms. Grove. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ms. Sidwell and Mr. West.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Leslie T. Knight
Assistant City Manager/Human Resources Management Director

/lmh-lyc