



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Board of Directors
Title: Request to Adjust Salaries for the Communications and Public Affairs Manager, the Water Resources Specialist Series and to Establish Flex Staffing Classifications for the Payroll Technician and HR Technician Job Series
From: Vikkie Garay, Human Resources Manager
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager
Meeting Date: April 21, 2026

TYPE OF ITEM: X Action Information

RECOMMENDATION: Approve salary adjustments for the Communications and Public Affairs Manager, Assistant Water Resources Specialist and the Associate Water Resources Specialist and approve the addition of two flex staffing classifications for the Payroll Technician and HR Technician job series to align with business needs

SUMMARY: Staff is requesting several salary/job classification adjustments to align these positions with the ongoing work at the District and to meet District business needs. First, to support the District's strategic plan and related initiatives, staff seeks to add responsibilities that increase and modify the duties of the Communications and Public Affairs Manager position. Commensurate with these added responsibilities, staff is requesting approval for a 5% salary increase for this position.

Second, as part of the agreement to extend the Memorandum of Understanding with SEIU, all engineering classifications received a salary adjustment of 6% to align with the competitive market for engineering positions in the Bay Area. Staff is seeking approval to adjust the salary for the Assistant Water Resources Specialist and Associate Water Resources Specialist by 6%, retroactively to February 9, 2026 – the same effective date as the equity adjustment for the engineering series. With this approval, staff will update Amendment No. 1 to the MOU to include this position series in the equity adjustment.

Third, District Administrative Policy No. 50 outlines the purpose and application of flexibly staffed classifications. Under the policy, flexibly staffed classifications are a classification series wherein the assigned work is similar at the lower level and journey level of the classification series. Flexible classes within the District are typically flexible up to the II-level. The objective of the policy is to support the growth and retention of employees.

The District currently has specified classifications for the Payroll Technician in the Finance Department, and Human Resources Technician in the Human Resources Department. As part of the District's efforts to upgrade SAP, which is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software module, these classifications are performing higher level work, with more technical expertise and cross training required. Staff has identified an ongoing need for a more advanced level of support across multiple payroll and HR functions. Staff is seeking approval to establish classifications for Payroll Technician I/II and Human Resources Technician I/II to more accurately reflect the journey level work that will be required in the modern version of SAP.

DISCUSSION: In addition to managing the District's communications program, the Communications and Public Affairs Manager will provide support and strategic advisement to the General Manager in planning, directing and reviewing District programs, initiatives, and operations; will support the General Manager in ensuring consistent follow-through on Board-related requests; and will coordinate cross-departmental responses to requests, when necessary. The incumbent is also responsible for overseeing the administration of Board meetings, records, and related processes.

After the Water Resources Division was created, an Assistant Water Resources Specialist and Associate Water Resources Specialist classification series was established to perform professional and technical water resources work in the areas of planning, system modelling, water quality, operations, climate change, and energy efficiency. The District has budgeted for one position in the series. This is a single incumbent position; the incumbent may be placed at the Assistant or the Associate level, depending on experience. The Assistant is distinguished from the Associate Water Resources Specialist in that the latter functions as a project manager and is responsible for ensuring project management and performs more complex engineering work. Both the Associate Engineer and the Associate Water Resources position require a valid Professional Engineer (P.E) license issued by the State. Staff desires to compensate the Assistant and Associate Water Resources Specialist at the same level as the Assistant and Associate Engineer.

The Payroll Technician and Human Resources Technician are both single-incumbent, non-represented positions. They work closely together to ensure consistent HR and payroll functionality and both positions provide specialized service to our employees. In addition, both of these classifications are responsible for interpreting and implementing increasingly complex labor regulations.

As the District has progressed through the modernization of its HR and Payroll systems, it has become evident that these classifications will need to be more adept at configuring, troubleshooting and utilizing data modules within the new ERP software. They will also be taking on the lead training role for their respective payroll and HR modules. Incumbents at the II level will perform all tasks currently covered in the existing classification, and they will be expected to perform additional journey level tasks, including reporting, research, reconciliation, analysis and legal compliance. Incumbents in these classifications will be responsible for providing support to employees and managers for the new employee self-service and manager self-service HR and Payroll modules.

These adjustments will not result in a change to overall staffing numbers within the District. In accordance with District Flex Staffing policy, internal staff will be eligible for progression to the higher level only after meeting specified performance criteria. When employees are moved to the higher level, the resulting lower-level vacancy will be eliminated as an offset but may be utilized to fill future vacancies within these classifications.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT: The current salary range for the Communications and Public Affairs Manager is \$183,768 to \$233,064. With a 5% increase, the salary at the top step would be \$244,717. The cost of the proposed salary adjustment would be \$11,653, annually.

The Water Resources Specialist position is currently staffed at the Associate level. The current salary for that position is \$137,904 to \$166,572. The cost increase attributable to the equity adjustments for the Associate Water Resources classification at the top step is an additional \$9,996, annually.

The current salary ranges for the Human Resources Technician and Payroll Technicians are \$95,772 to \$116,928, and \$93,900 to \$114,624, respectively. Staff recommends that the Human Resources Technician II and Payroll Technician II classifications be aligned, with the salary range of \$100,561 to \$122,774 for both positions. If both positions are filled at the higher level, the additional cost of the proposed flex staffing classifications would be \$15,508 annually.

Sufficient funds are available in the current budget to account for the cost of these salary adjustments.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.

DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	DIVISION MANAGER	APPROVED
Human Resources		
	Vikkie Garay HR Manager	Ben Horenstein General Manager