

City of Shakopee
MEMORANDUM

TO: Bill Reynolds, City Administrator
Copy: Darin Nelson, Finance Director
FROM: Steve Lillehaug, City Engineer/Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Water Resources/Environmental Engineer
DATE: October 3, 2017

This memo is written to provide the background and justification that substantiates the need for a Water Resources/Environmental Engineer position within the City of Shakopee Public Works (PW) Engineering Department, and I respectfully ask your consideration.

In the short time that I have been here at Shakopee, I have evaluated the workload and the existing structure to deliver the workload. While I am continuing to evaluate all PW duties and have identified some internal adjustments that I plan to implement over the next couple of years, I have identified an immediate need and recommendation that will streamline delivering certain work tasks, provide better customer service, and result in substantial cost savings to the city pertaining to water resources.

Currently, WSB is being used as the exclusive consultant for surface water resource assistance. Most notably, WSB houses the city storm water model and their staff are well educated on the city's storm water rules. They are currently being used as a direct extension of city staff, performing relatively all surface water evaluation and engineering work for the city (in lieu of any city staff member performing this work). WSB's billings associated with general storm water work amounts to well over \$100k for the 7-month period from January through July 2017. Extrapolating for a full year, it equates to approximately \$170k. (Note: This amount only pertains to general storm water work, understanding that the city also contracted with WSB for a substantial amount of additional work pertaining to Quarry Park, Tahpah Park, the Downtown project, Windermere, Vierling, 4th/Shenandoah, Mill Pond dam repair and other miscellaneous projects amounting to several hundred-thousand dollars of additional billed out work for the same period, well beyond the \$170k.)

I have not yet developed a job description for the proposed Water Resources/Environmental Engineer, but the following is a list of tasks that would benefit by having this position:

1. ***MPCA MS4 NPDES permitting program requirements*** – MS4 program requirements are significant, take a well-trained team to stay on top of the program, and are basically unfunded mandates. It is my opinion that the current internal system lacks the required level of program management to ensure the city delivers and fulfills the requirements under the city's permit. This is a significant yearlong program and there needs to be an

internal champion assigned as the manager. The city was recently fined \$10,590 by the MPCA for a couple of basic items that were not in place, and my evaluation of the system shows that we are still lacking and need to improve to meet the requirements of our permit. This new Engineer would be assigned to lead this task. Estimated 10% Full Time Employee (FTE).

2. **Development storm sewer/water resources review** – All of the city's stormwater and Wetland Conservation Act review for developments are consulted out to WSB. Some developers have even referred to WSB as if WSB is another jurisdiction when in fact they are simply performing the review on behalf of the city. It is my opinion that there has been a lack of ownership and clear understanding of the city's storm water requirements internally. This new Engineer would be assigned to lead this task. It should also be noted that we would continue needing support from a primary consultant (e.g. WSB); however, to a much lesser extent. Estimated 15% FTE.
3. **City stormwater improvement projects** – The majority of city stormwater water improvement projects are consulted out to WSB. While I expect the majority of stormwater design projects to continue to be farmed out, this position would be the primary program manager, bringing together the issues, CIP, water resources management plan, and working with our consultants to streamline their work and keep them on track. Estimated 15% FTE.
4. **Storm drainage issues** – There are many lingering storm drainage issues and complaints that have not been addressed including negative impacts that have surfaced as part of development improvements, minor nuisance drainage issues, longstanding drainage issues, etc. Most of these issues are fixable and should be addressed by the city at one level or another. This new Engineer would be assigned to spearhead fully addressing these issues and more as they arise. Estimated 10% FTE.
5. **Watershed Districts, PLOC, SMSC coordination** – Having three-different watershed management jurisdictions, the PLOC, and the SMSC with each of their own water resource management plans, improvement projects and initiatives, staff liaison duties, etc. – this is a significant task. This new Engineer would be assigned to be the primary liaison for all stormwater and environmental matters with these multiple jurisdictions. Estimated 15% FTE.
6. **Natural resources** – Public Works must continue to carry on the many natural resource initiatives and programs that were performed by the Natural Resources Technician position that was recently eliminated. These continued tasks include: MS4 BMP surveys and annual inspections, native plant maintenance program, water quality monitoring program, miscellaneous grants, invasive species management, Tree City USA initiatives (tree sale, tree planting program, diseased tree program, tree watering, tree pruning, emerald ash borer program, etc.), conservation easement management, and other

natural resources initiatives. This new Engineer would be the natural resources program manager to ensure all of these tasks and initiatives continue. Estimated 15% FTE.

7. **Local Water Resources Management Plan** – It is my goal to use the Local Water Resources Management Plan as a working document, updating continuously and using it as the tool to create our annual CIP pertaining to storm drainage issues and initiatives. To meet this goal effectively, there needs to be an internal champion that is well versed with our plan. Additionally, we are required to have our plan updated fall 2018. This new Engineer would be assigned this task. Estimated 15% FTE.
8. **City stormwater model** – WSB houses the city's digital storm water model. I expect WSB to continue to house, maintain and update the city's model, but ideally, we could expand our internal capacity to provide a lower level of technical use of the model vs. relying on WSB to provide all services at every level. This new Engineer would be assigned to be the liaison with WSB to maintain our model and to use the model at a lower level on the city's end. This new Engineer would be assigned this task. Estimated 5% FTE.

The estimated FTE percentages are approximate, but demonstrate the anticipated work towards each of these tasks. The outline above represents a workload that easily equates to a full-time workload for a new Water Resources/Environmental Engineer.

As indicated above, it is estimated that WSB performs approximately \$170k of annual general storm water work. Going forward, it is proposed to have a better balance of project workload using combination of internal staff (new Engineer) and consultants. Additionally, the work that was performed by the Natural Resources Technician was budgeted for \$56,500 in 2017, understanding that a portion of these duties would be passed on to this new Engineer.

There is enough work for this position where the city would indeed experience cost savings by hiring an internal staff member that would perform more of this work, streamlining the work and providing better customer service as result of being within our office. My recommendation is to fund this position 20% out of the Natural Resources Fund and 80% out of the Surface Water Fund.

Please let me know if any questions and your consideration is greatly appreciated.