



MEMORANDUM

TO: Rhea Reynolds, Human Resources Director

CC: Ken Klein, Executive Director

FROM: Mike McCrary, PDS Director *MM*

SUBJECT: PDS Reclassification of Position #PDS1073R Deputy Director to NEW Operational Improvement Manager

DATE: March 18, 2022

Dave Somers
County Executive

History

The PDS Division Manager position was established in January 2004 and existed until 2009. During this time period, there was a Director, Deputy Director, separate Fire Marshal, and 9-11 Division Managers overseeing a staff of 215-228. The staff-to-manager ratio was approximately 20 staff to every manager. The position was eliminated during the economic downturn in 2009 when PDS cut over 70 positions from its work force (another 40 positions were eliminated the following year). Also in 2009, the Fire Marshal position was combined with a Division Manager position.

In the 2017 budget, the Exec's Office added the Deputy Director position back to PDS. The organizational structure at this time included a Director, Deputy Director, and 4 Division Managers overseeing a staff of approximately 135. When the Deputy Director position was added back in 2017, the Fire Marshal duties were added to it. In 2021, when I was appointed PDS Director, I retained the Fire Marshal duties and we have hired an Assistant Fire Marshal to manage the day-to-day operations of the Fire Marshal's Office. The Deputy Director position has remained vacant since my appointment, pending a department needs assessment.

Summary of Request

PDS would like to use the Deputy Director vacancy to hire a different type of management exempt position that would more directly benefit the department and address unmet needs in terms of resources. PDS has a need for an Operational Improvement Manager to lead the department's continuous improvement efforts.

Justification

At this time, PDS does not need another Division Manager or Deputy Director. The staff-to-manager ratio is currently 24 staff to every manager, which is manageable considering we have 6 supervisors and 5 team leads who are very hands-on and run the day-to-day operations of PDS. In addition, PDS has budgeted deficit spending for the next few years which does not support adding more upper level management positions.

However, PDS does need additional resources in the area of Continuous Improvement. Since 2018, the Permitting division has been working on streamlining the electronic permitting process, but there is still a long

way to go in the areas of staff technical reviews, communication with applicants, and reducing the review timelines. Our goal is to drastically reduce review times, but in order to do this we need to implement new procedures with involve significant culture change, performance metrics, and constant monitoring. Currently it is not the number of permitting staff that is holding us back (although we do have several vacancies for which recruiting in today's job market has been difficult), but rather the review process is still not well coordinated amongst the work groups and communications with applicants is not where we would like it to be. For the past two years, the supervisors have been tasked with streamlining the review process, but the day-to-day work always takes precedent. The department would benefit from assistance with process improvement by someone who can work across the entire department, connect dots among work groups, and make change stick through intensive monitoring.

A new position focused on project management and continuous improvement would help PDS by moving the responsibility for the big, systemic process changes to someone who:

- Has structural authority for change by reporting directly to the management team;
- Can work across the organization without a bias toward any one group;
- Can establish organization goals for reviews and articulate these to each work group;
- Can document job instructions and performance expectations by job and work group;
- Can consistently and thoroughly train each work group on process changes;
- Can monitor progress on established process improvement goals through performance metrics and individual permit reviews;
- Can provide timely staff feedback based on data; and
- Can measure results and document the outcomes of PDS's continuous improvement projects.

In addition, PDS is at a cross-roads in terms of its end-to-end permitting system, and we need to evaluate our long-term technology needs and update our strategic technology plan. The biggest challenge in our permitting system is the intake process, which utilizes a third-party application and does not seamlessly integrate with Amanda, PDS's permitting database. PDS needs to either (a) significantly redesign how we use the third-party intake system to make it easier for customers to submit a permit application, or (b) build our own intake system that is tied directly to the Amanda permitting system. Either of these would be a huge undertaking, requiring a project management lead who has a solid understanding management's expected customer service levels and desired outcomes.

Budget Impact

The proposed reclassification could save PDS \$2,000 to \$20,000 per year depending on how the new position is classified and the incumbent's starting salary. In the 2022 budget, the Deputy Director position funding (\$117,000 salary) was moved out of Administration and into Permitting.

Next Steps

Attached is a draft job specification for a new Operational Improvement Manager position. It includes a list of the job duties, skills, and education/experience we desire in the new proposed position. We believe the position compensation should be a management exempt pay grade 109 based on a comparison of other positions in PDS and the county. We have reviewed the Auditor's Job Spec # 2356 for a Project Coordinator and feel that the duties as outlined in that job spec are not quite what we're looking for in our new position. We have also reviewed the job specs for the continuous improvement positions in the Operational Excellence team in the Exec's Office (pay grade 110). While the qualifications are very similar, the job duties of the PDS internal management position we envision are different than the job duties of the enterprise level consultant-type positions in Operational Excellence.