



City of Biggs

Agenda Item Staff Report for the Regular City Council Meeting: March 21, 2011 6:00PM

DATE: March 15, 2011

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Pete Carr, City Administrator

SUBJECT: Staffing Request: Planning and General Office Assistant
(Discussion/Action/Direction to Staff)

City Administrator will present options for Council consideration in light of the extended leave of absence of one office employee.

Background

The Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement employee went to part-time (25 hours per week) in October, then on leave in November, and remains out today. Council extended the normal 90-day leave to 150 days (March 31) at the employee's request.

It is not yet known whether the employee will be returning by March 31. In her absence, remaining staff have picked up some of the duties while the code enforcement function has been almost entirely contracted to PMC. Office staffing limitations have frequently resulted in noon-time closure of the customer service window, and can be expected to result in increased closures – possibly daylong -- when employees are out for attendance at out-of-town meetings and training, planned vacations, and unplanned emergency absences.

If the planning/code enforcement employee returns, it is assumed she will resume previous administrative and code enforcement duties as in October. In this case, the customer service function would have sufficient back-up and PMC code enforcement observation services would no longer be required.

If the employee continues to remain off work or is not going to return, several options are available:

- A. Acknowledge and allow temporary closures of city hall customer service; continue PMC in code enforcement role.

- B. Hire a part-time employee (15-18 hours per week) at the city's lowest pay rate, no health insurance benefits, to assist with customer service, office clerical, code enforcement observation and administration functions.
 - This could be temporary or permanent.
 - Administrator would first seek availability of low-cost resources through agencies such as PIC.
 - Tasks for the new part-time help would include:
 - a. Customer service utility bill payments, telephone reception, dispatch of public works as needed, typing, filing.
 - b. Code enforcement observations, completion of related administrative tasks under direction of city planner.

Hiring temp help as-needed is not less expensive than ongoing help if a temp agency is used, and could not be expected to provide sufficient skills training nor coverage for unplanned absences.

Due to legal and insurance bonding issues, most of this position is not considered an appropriate opportunity for utilization of volunteers.

Attachments: none

Recommendation:

Direct staff.

Fiscal Impact of Recommendation:

October part-time planning assistant/code enforcement cost was \$3623/mo.

Current PMC code enforcement service contract is approximately \$2240/mo.

Plan B part-time help @ 18 hrs/wk would be \$803 + payroll taxes = \$900/mo.