



**Board Administrative Committee
May 2, 2019**

SUBJECT:

Apprenticeship Program

BACKGROUND:

On October 6, 2016, management presented a report regarding instituting an apprenticeship program (program) to the Board Administrative Committee. The program requires a four-year commitment and steady progression through training and practical knowledge. The program combines supervised District on-the-job training and classroom instruction contracted through Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Participants in the program are considered “at-will” employees as a condition of accepting an apprentice position. At the successful completion of the four-year program the apprentice would be reclassified to a regular classification within their trade (e.g. Control Technician). All participants are provided with the details of the program and expectations, as noted in Exhibit A and are required to sign the Apprentice Agreement.

With the support of the committee, the District initiated the program in the fourth quarter of 2016 with two participants in the electrical trades. The District was able to secure enrollment in MWD’s classroom instruction course for these two participants. The program provides hands on and classroom instruction with testing to proceed to completion. The two participants have been recognized multiple times by MWD instructors as top performing students and are on track to complete the program by the year 2020. Once the participants successfully complete the four year program, they will transition into Control Technician vacancies.

In order to perform succession planning for upcoming retirements, the District will be continuing this program. The mechanical group, in charge of maintaining and operating water and sewer stations, has 53 percent (17 employees) of staff eligible to retire. Based on years of service, 22 percent (seven employees) are more than likely to retire within the next three years. The District needs to plan for these vacancies.

Based on the projected vacancies, staff has included one new apprentice position in the Proposed Biennial Budget for Fiscal Years 2019-20 and 2020-21. The District was able to tentatively secure one position in the training and curriculum program with MWD. In order to finalize the course enrollment, the District needs to complete the recruitment and onboarding process for this apprentice position. Course orientation at MWD begins in June 2019, prior to the adoption of the biennial budget. The wages and benefits associated with position will be absorbed within the current approved budget.

Continued advancement of the apprentice program helps the District develop highly-skilled

individuals, who will be very familiar with both the District's operational procedures and service area, to seamlessly fill expected vacancies in the future due to retirements.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding for this item is provided for in the Biennial Budget for Fiscal Years 2017-18 and 2018-19.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOAL/OBJECTIVE:

Become the employer of choice for high performing employees by sustaining a safe and ethical workplace that promotes innovation and provides opportunities for employee development to achieve job fulfillment.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is informational only.

SUBMITTED BY:



Paul D. Jones II, P.E., General Manager

4/26/2019



Laura Nomura, Deputy General Manager

4/25/2019

Attachment(s):

Exhibit A - Apprentice Program Details and Expectations

05/15/19 Board Meeting

Staff Contact: Laura Zamora