



Legislation Text

File #: 14-1598, **Version:** 1

Community Development Agency, Transportation Division, recommending the Board adopt Resolution **031-2015** amending the Authorized Personnel Allocation Resolution for the Community Development Agency, Transportation Division, to add 2.0 positions as follows: add one (1.0) Equipment Mechanic I/II to the Maintenance and Operations Unit Tahoe Equipment Shop; and add one (1.0) Highway Maintenance Worker I to the Maintenance and Operations, West Slope Road Maintenance.

FUNDING: Road Fund Discretionary. (No Federal Funds)

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost

No change to Net County Cost. Costs associated with the recommended positions in Fiscal Year 2014/15 (FY14/15) will be provided through budget adjustments by redistributing funding used for contracted dead animal removal work taken in-house and salary savings in the Road Fund for the remainder of FY 14/15.

Additional Cost

Estimated costs for salary and benefits for the Equipment Mechanic I/II over a 12-month period are \$88,865. However, if approved, the position will likely not be filled until March 2015; therefore, the anticipated FY 14/15 expenditure will reflect three months of salary and benefits at \$22,216 and funded through elimination of an existing extra help position and Road Fund salary savings, which will fit within the requested 3% reduction for all County Agencies.

Estimated costs for salary and benefits for the Highway Maintenance Worker I position, over a 12-month period, are \$76,408. If approved, this position will likely not be filled until March 2015; therefore, the anticipated FY 14/15 expenditure will reflect three months of salary and benefits at \$19,101 and funded through redistribution of 5300 Interfund Service funding and existing Road Fund salary savings, which will fit within the requested 3% reduction for all County Agencies.

In future budget years, the Equipment Mechanic I/II will be funded by reallocating the existing \$19,710 budgeted for a winter extra help Equipment Mechanic position, which will be eliminated and the remaining \$69,155 will be funded from the Road Fund.

In future budget years, the Highway Maintenance Worker I will be funded by reallocating the existing \$50,000 budgeted in the 5300 Interfund Service between fund types that funded the dead animal removal and disposal activity completed by Animal Services for the Transportation Division (Transportation). The remaining \$26,408 will be funded from the Road Fund.

Equipment Mechanic I/II - Tahoe Equipment Shop - Justification

Transportation traditionally leased motor graders that were replaced every seven years. Due to funding restrictions, seven year replacement doesn't occur, and Transportation currently owns heavy equipment that is aging. The County does not have the benefit of warranty coverage and the

maintenance workload on these machines have increased. Heavy equipment will require more repairs and more maintenance than new equipment for the Tahoe Equipment Shop. Also, the age of existing rotary snow blowers range from 29 to 45 years old and repair parts are either no longer available or difficult to find. Equipment Mechanics are needed to perform greater than normal maintenance to maintain these aging pieces of equipment.

Due to changes in emission regulations in recent years on the diesel engines, Transportation has had a major increase in workload to maintain emission control devices that have been installed on nearly every truck and piece of heavy equipment the County owns. Warranties on these units have also expired and will impact the work load of shop staff in Tahoe.

The current Tahoe Equipment Shop staff has a short vacation season since vacation is normally not allowed during the high volume winter months. Because vacation is only allowed in the summer, summer staff is unable to complete the daily workloads when employees are on leave. Often the snow blowers have to be transferred down to the West Slope Equipment Shop in the summer because there are not enough employees available at Tahoe to complete the work. This causes problems as the West Slope staff is not as knowledgeable as the Tahoe Staff on the equipment repairs needed on these machines. In addition, for several fall months we send staff to Tahoe from the West Slope to supplement staffing. During these times Transportation pays these individuals overtime to ensure as much work as possible is completed.

Transportation has repeatedly had difficulty in finding and hiring extra help for the winter season at Tahoe. This is largely due to the failing economy in the Tahoe Basin and the available workforce leaving the area to find full time jobs. The available candidates are less likely to take temporary work when there are full time jobs available outside the Tahoe Basin. Each year, it is uncertain if the same employee can be hired for the winter work. In the case that they do not return, Transportation has to re-train a new employee. Currently, Transportation hires an extra help employee each year and this practice will be curtailed with the hiring of a full-time Equipment Mechanic I/II.

Overall, an added Equipment Mechanic I/II in the Tahoe Equipment Shop will enable the shop to keep up with the increasing work demand, schedule time off for all employees during the summer months and provide a more efficient work environment by eliminating the need to find, hire and train extra help each winter season.

Highway Maintenance Worker I - West Slope Road Operations - Justification

Transportation was recently required to take on the responsibility of dead animal removal and disposal on County roadways (Legistar Item 14-0954 - July 22, 2014). Transportation has determined after four months of dead animal removal and disposal, that there is a need for a permanent position. The dead animal removal activity is currently being covered by existing staffing levels within the Maintenance Unit, which in turn, takes crew members away from road maintenance, extending the time needed to complete projects and at times missing deadlines. Transportation ran an informal Request for Quote to determine the approximate cost of contracting these responsibilities. We received only one response from all solicited vendors. The responsive vendor quoted various per animal per area rates depending on the location of the dead animal. Based on dead animal removal logs, staff estimates the average annual proposed cost of contracting this work would be \$108,000.

The Highway Maintenance Worker I position will cover the dead animal removal and disposal on all County maintained roadways. In the event, there is minimal dead animal removals or it does not

require a full day's work, the Highway Maintenance Worker will assist the West Slope Road Maintenance operations where needed.

Reason for Recommendation

Transportation recommends amending the personnel allocation for the Transportation Division to add two positions and use a redistribution of 5300 Interfund Service funding and salary savings in the Road Fund for the remainder of the FY 14/15 to fund these positions in the amount of approximately \$41,317. For future budget years, these positions will be funded by a combination of reallocation of a budgeted extra help position, redistribution of 5300 Interfund Service funding and Road Funds.

The consequences of not increasing Transportation's allocation as it relates to the Equipment Mechanic position will be the negative impact to the maintenance of the heavy equipment and truck fleet stationed in the Tahoe Basin by delays in scheduling, and the inability to make the more intricate and complicated repairs in the Tahoe shop. More expense will be incurred by transporting the equipment to the West Slope Equipment Shop, which will in turn impact that shop's ability to get work done on West Slope equipment. Further, not granting the increased appropriation will continue the difficulties we now experience in having coverage for staff to take their earned time off and the need to find Extra Help in the Winter season, train them, and then have to repeat the cycle again each year, which also incurs expenses and reduced effective work production at critical times due to a lack of experience and expertise of the extra help employee to repair and maintain our equipment.

The consequences of not filling the Highway Maintenance Worker I will continue to have a negative impact as it removes staff from current road maintenance activities to complete necessary and timely dead animal removal and disposal. Other possible consequences of not filling the Highway Maintenance Worker I position for dead animal removal will impact planned road projects and planned deadlines that may not be met due to insufficient and staffing levels. This position is responsible for dead animal removal on County maintained roads and at certain times takes two staff members to handle the removals which further impact maintenance activities. We have also sent out Requests for Quotes to have the services provided by a vendor. One response was received with an estimated annual cost of \$108,000, exceeding what an FTE position would cost.

For these reasons Transportation recommends that the Board adopt a Resolution amending the Authorized Personnel Allocation Resolution for the Community Development Agency, Transportation Division, to add 2.0 positions as follows; add one (1.0) Equipment Mechanic I/II to Maintenance and Operations Unit, Tahoe Equipment Shop; and add one (1.0) Highway Maintenance Worker I to Maintenance and Operations, West Slope Road Maintenance.

Clerk of the Board Follow Up Actions

Clerk of the Board to provide Human Resources with one (1) copy of the resolution signed by the Chair.

Contact

Bard R. Lower
Transportation Division Director
Community Development Agency

Concurrences

N/A