

DATE: June 18, 2020

TO: WCA Governing Board

FROM: Deborah Enos, Deputy Executive Officer

THROUGH: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 12: Consideration of a resolution to authorize Executive Officer or designee to negotiate and award a professional services consultant contract for a compensation analysis plan.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) Governing Board authorizes the Executive Officer or designee to negotiate and award a professional services consultant contract for a compensation analysis plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The WCA has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) and will award a contract with a qualified consulting firm to develop a compensation analysis plan and associated compensation recommendations. The intent of the compensation plan is to achieve comparable equity with the local market and peer agencies in order to attract and retain experienced and dedicated staff and ensure competitiveness in the marketplace. The completed plan will be brought before the Governing Board for consideration to adopt the plan and recommendations at a future meeting.

BACKGROUND: The Authority embarked on conducting a comparable salary study in FY19/20 to be utilized in updating the FY20/21 budget year. This preliminary study, compiled during the first quarter 2020, identified a significant competitive disadvantage and salary disparity in the Authority's compensation structure in the magnitude of up to 30% when compared to other local agency peer salaries.

Longer tenured staff experiences the greatest disparity with COLA only salary increases being the norm since becoming an employer entity in 2010. Additionally, new hires and promotions have largely been considered in relationship to existing personnel to avoid an internal inequity. The FY13/14 salary range chart has also needed periodic updates for COLA (last done FY17/18) so existing staff kept pace with the lowest salary level in the range. In order for the Authority to attract new hires, management has had to rely on opportunities provided for professional development across a broad range of environmental project work — from acquisitions, regional and site planning, property management, project and grant management and soon to be park operations and programming. This selling point is also what leads to the eventual loss of staff by making them more valuable and marketable to our competitors.

In summary, the Authority has not kept pace with the comparable salary market and deserving of correction, even in this time of uncertainty, in the name of fairness and equity. Having an inequitable compensation structure has been detrimental to the longevity and sustainability of the Authority. This disparity has resulted in the continued loss of any training value, lost work productivity, lost institutional knowledge, efficiencies in project implementation, and has generally impacted morale. At times the turnover has led to increased workloads during periods of new staff recruit. The Authority also suffers increased administrative costs and a reduction in grant revenues while the Authority engages in recruiting, training and investing in new, often less experienced staff. Compounded in later years, by losing these

same staff, after having gained valuable experience, to higher paying and less demanding jobs with our peers at local Cities, County, and State entities. This non-constructive staffing cycle has been identified over the years during budget presentations and strategic planning sessions as both a weakness and threat to the Authority. To the credit of the Authority's team and culture and despite the challenges, staff remains dedicated to providing the highest quality of professionalism and work, as well as, being a trusted and influential partner who contributes to a variety of regional programs to improve our watersheds.

On May 18, 2020, the presentation of the preliminary FY20/21 budget included a zero net budgetary line item for personnel salaries inclusive with an allowance for salary adjustments and a recommendation to hire a third party consultant to complete a compensation analysis plan.

FISCAL INFORMATION: The Compensation Analysis Plan contract will be funded from the personnel line items within the FY20/21.

June 18, 2020 - Item 12

RESOLUTION 2020-18

RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OR DESIGNEE TO NEGOTIATE AND AWARD OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONSULTANT CONTRACT FOR A COMPENSATION ANALYSIS PLAN

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has been established as a joint powers agency between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects in both the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers watershed; and

WHEREAS, this action authorizes the Executive Officer or designee to negotiate and award a professional services consultant contract for a compensation analysis plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); NOW

Therefore, be it resolved that the WCA hereby:

1. FINDS that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
2. ADOPTS the staff report dated June 18, 2020.
3. AUTHORIZES the Executive Officer or designee to negotiate and award a professional services consultant contract for a compensation analysis plan to be funded from the FY2020/2021 personnel budget.

~ End of Resolution ~

//

Motion _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Resolution 2020-18

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
ON June 18, 2020

Herlinda Chico
Governing Board Chair

ATTEST: _____
David Edsall, Jr.
Deputy Attorney General