

**ST. LOUIS COUNTY  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

Court House  
Duluth, Minnesota

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The St. Louis County Civil Service Commission met on Monday, April 6, 2020 at 1:30 P.M. The meeting was held virtually via a telephone conference line that was sent out to the public.

Members present: Mr. Kenneth Butler, Chair  
Mr. Wayne Marshall, Member  
Ms. Lindsay Snustad, Member  
Julie Waltenburg, Alternate Member

Others present: James Gottschald, Director Human Resources and Administration  
Colleen Effinger, Manager Human Resources  
Catherine Roseth, Human Resources Senior Advisor

1. A motion was made by Lindsay Snustad, seconded by Julie Waltenburg and agreed to via roll call vote by all members present to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2020 meeting as submitted.
2. The next item on the agenda was consideration of the revised class specification for Emergency Management Coordinator. Sheriff Litman proposed revising the Emergency Management Coordinator to recognize the complexity and magnitude of the work performed. Items revised include the title, updating responsibilities and duties, as well as conducting a market study to determine if the salary grade is appropriate. A motion was made by Julie Waltenburg, seconded by Lindsay Snustad and agreed to via roll call vote by all present members.
3. The next item on the agenda was consideration of the revised class specification IT Applications Developer Senior. Originally when the Minimum Qualifications were developed, the thought was that internal candidates would move through the series within the specialty starting at the lowest level four years (4) and then working through the mid-level position for two (2) years. For a combined total of six (6) years in the job series before moving into the senior level. However, if an employee was hired at the mid-level position they would be required to work six

(6) years in the mid-level and that was not the intent. At this time the six (6) year requirement is being removed, but the two (2) year mid-level requirement will be maintained in order to advance to the senior level. Director Gottschald and HR Manager, Colleen Effinger, provided additional background regarding how this revision is a result of labor negotiation discussions regarding job series progression. Ms. Effinger fielded questions presented by Commission members. A motion was made by Wayne Marshall, seconded by Lindsay Snustad and agreed to via roll call vote by all present members.

4. The next item on the agenda was consideration of the revised class specification for IT Systems Engineer Senior. Similar to the IT Applications Developer series, when the Minimum Qualifications were developed, the intent was that the internal candidates would move through the series within this specialty area starting at the lowest level for four (4) years, and then working through the mid-level position for two (2) years. For a combined total of six (6) years in the mid-level. At this time, the overall six (6) year requirement is being removed, but the two (2) year mid-level requirement will be maintained in order to advance to the senior level. A motion was made by Julie Waltenburg, seconded by Wayne Marshall and agreed to via roll call vote by all present members.

#### DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

- Director Gottschald provided an update on St. Louis County's role during the COVID19 pandemic. He outlined the numerous essential and critical functions as outlined by the Department of Homeland Security that the county performs including assisting constituents applying for medical and financial assistance, law enforcement, corrections facilities, public works personnel, and vital records. He advised up to 60% of the workforce is currently working remotely, 25%-30% are still working on site with minimum staffing numbers with some departments working rotating schedules to minimize risk. A small number of employees have been sent home as C19 Administration Status these individuals are essentially at home ready and waiting for work. Employees in this status are unable to work from home due to issues such as technology access or the work they do is not conducive to remote work. All our employees

fall into one of these three categories.

- Director Gottschald reported that a policy of Utilization of Paid Leave during a Public Health Emergency has been activated for St. Louis County employees. This policy allows employees to go into a negative balance of up to 2 weeks of paid sick leave if they don't have an adequate pool of sick leave hours available. Director Gottschald further explained that employees have been given great discretion to utilize all types of paid leave including the use of sick leave if an employee needs to stay home to care for a child due to school or childcare closures. Director Gottschald noted that Human Resources staff have been working hard on the Families' First Coronavirus Response Act. This Act provides two weeks of Government paid sick leave for individuals that are self-quarantined, have an illness that is COVID related, or are caring for children that are now home. Human Resources has also been working closely with the legal team to understand and digest the guidelines coming out for the Federal programs. HR is also working with various other departments within the county to determine what functions are essential and how to change operations to a remote based model.
- Director Gottschald advised the Commission that three labor agreements have been settled. He reported that Ms. Effinger has started implementing the settled agreements as well as sent out all seniority lists by April 1<sup>st</sup> as required pursuant to Civil Service Rules.
- Director Gottschald enumerated on how the various Executive Orders issued by Governor Walz could and likely will have an impact on small business and individuals within St. Louis County that could translate to late or no payments on property taxes. Director Gottschald advised that the County is actively anticipating this decrease and trying to estimate what the impact will be to revenue and what measures need to be taken to adjust to the decrease in funding.
- Director Gottschald fielded questions from the members regarding a potential change to property taxes owed by individuals and businesses. Director Gottschald explained that tax delinquency and abatement is a complicated process that is determined by Legislature and in Statute. However, there does

appear to be some ability for the Board to pass exceptions surrounding delays in delivery to the postal service or inaccuracy in the assessment of fees which does not match the current situation. Director Gottschald hoped the State Legislature would pass bills that address this issue and makes a decision that is more uniform and equitable across all of the MN tax base.

- Member Lindsay Snustad recognized Director Gottschald's leadership during an unprecedented time. In turn, Director Gottschald recognized the many departments and individuals within the St. Louis County organization that are providing outstanding work.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James R. Gottschald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'J'.

James R. Gottschald  
Director of Human Resources and Administration