



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Kerrie Romanow

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 05-22-13

Approved

Date

5/22/13

**SUBJECT: SAN JOSE/SANTA CLARA REGIONAL WASTEWATER FACILITY
STAFFING STATUS REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION

Accept this status report on the staffing situation at the San José/Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility (RWF).

OUTCOME

Acceptance of the report will update the Committee on the state of the RWF (formerly known as San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant) staffing.

BACKGROUND

On August 28, 2012, the City Auditor presented her findings in the audit report titled "Environmental Services: A Department at a Critical Juncture." It was reported that "the Plant has experienced significant workforce losses in operations and maintenance." Employee separations, including retirements and resignations have resulted in falling experience levels and increasing overtime hours. Since that time, quarterly RWF staffing status reports have been provided to the Transportation and Environment Committee.

On March 4, 2013 a RWF staffing status report was presented to the Transportation and Environment Committee that reported a 25 per cent vacancy rate in the combined five critical classifications: Plant Operators, Plant Mechanics, Industrial Electricians, Instrument Control Technicians and Heavy Diesel Equipment Operator/Mechanics.

ANALYSIS

The Environmental Services Department (ESD), Human Resources (HR) and the Office of Employee Relations continue to coordinate and strategize to manage the Plant's staffing challenges. Several efforts are currently underway to address these challenges including classification studies for certain critical classifications, developing a robust training program to support existing staff and quickly integrate new staff, procuring temporary staffing contracts, and establishing new staffing models that enable more efficient succession planning. Additional information on each of these strategies is provided below:

Status of previously discussed strategies:

1. Classification Work: PLS Consulting, Inc was hired in February to conduct a classification and market study for several mission critical classifications. In Phase I, they analyzed the classifications of Plant Operator, Plant Mechanic, and Heavy Diesel Equipment Operator Mechanics (HDEOM) series classifications. Based on their analysis, recommendations will be presented to Council August 2013. Phase II, a review of the Instrumentation, Process Control and Residual Solids Management classifications began in May and is expected to be completed this Fall.
2. Training Program: A request for proposals for a Consultant to develop, implement and deliver technical trainings for staff at the RWF is in the evaluation phase. The selected Consultant will look at ways to accelerate integration of new and temporary staff to ensure continued and smooth operation of the Plant. The Consultant will also implement trainings that systematically and consistently increase the institutional and technical knowledge required to support RWF operations and CIP delivery.
3. Temporary Staffing Contracts: A master agreement with HKA Enterprises, Inc. to provide temporary staffing resources for Plant Mechanic and Plant Operators was approved by City Council on March 5, 2013. The temporary Operators and Mechanics will help bridge the staffing gap in these classifications until permanent employees are hired. An agreement with Aerotek to provide temporary Plant Mechanics and Plant Operators is being negotiated and will be brought forward for Council consideration pending successful negotiations.
4. Staffing Model: The State of California Division of Apprenticeship Standards approved the City's application for an Apprentice Plant Mechanic program on April 8, 2013. In addition to the Plant Attendant and Plant Operator Trainee classifications, the Apprentice Plant Mechanic program creates another point of entry into a career in the wastewater trade fields. Through this program, apprentices will "learn by doing" on-the-job with supplemental classroom instruction, while under the supervision of a joint management and labor committee to ensure success from both perspectives.

Additionally, HR has completed a procurement effort to secure third party recruiting resources. ESD will leverage these resources as soon as the above classification evaluations are completed to enhance our ability to quickly attract new talent. We are optimistic that the combination of added recruiting capacity and new classifications will improve our vacancy rate over the next several months.

Status Update on Recruitment, Vacancies and Overtime Usage

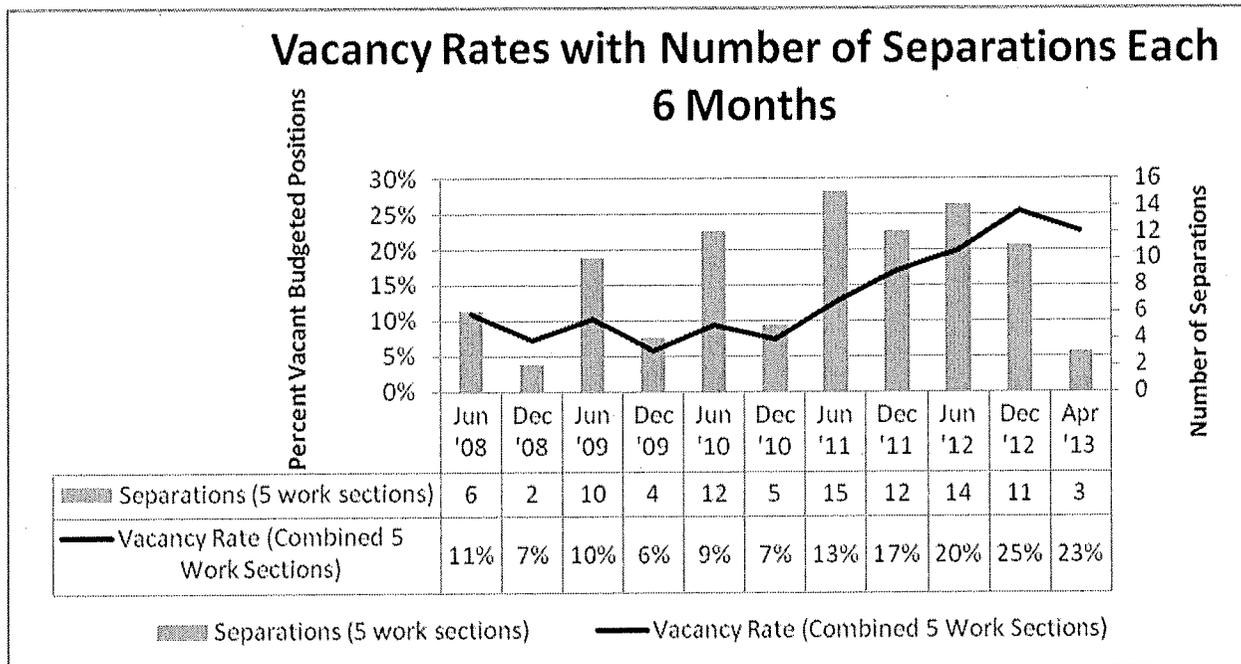
The five job classes that were addressed in the 2012 City Auditor's report are: Plant Operators, Plant Mechanics, Industrial Electricians, Instrument Control Technicians, and Heavy Diesel Equipment Operator/Mechanics within the Plant's Operations and Maintenance (O&M) division.

The combined vacancy rate of the five work sections was 20% in June 2012, 25% in both December 2012 and March 2013, and is currently 23%.

The following table shows the number of full time equivalent (FTE) positions authorized in each work section and the current number of vacancies in each group.

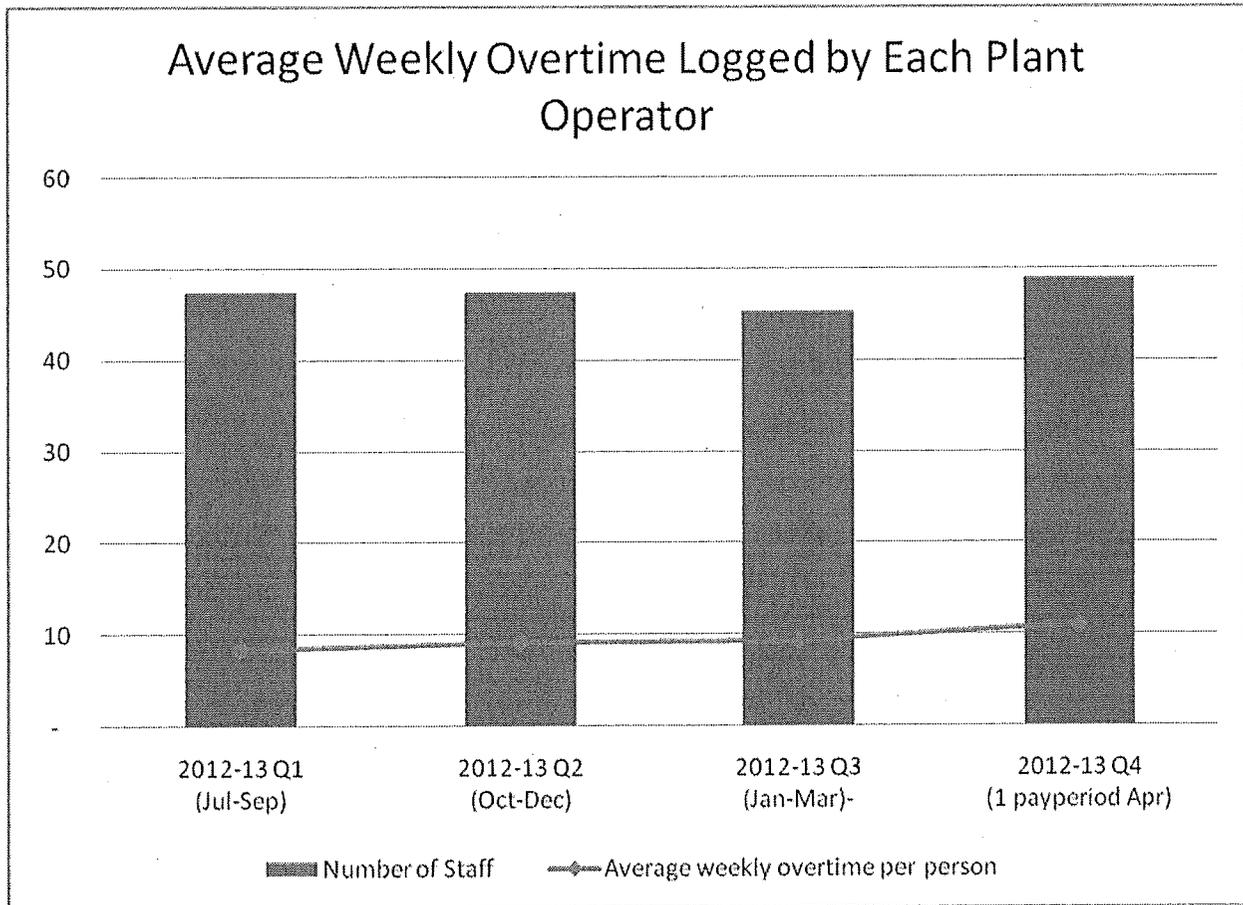
Work Section	Authorized FTEs	Current Vacancies (last report)	Current Vacancy Rate (4/13/13)
Plant Operators	60	11 (16)	18%
Plant Mechanics	40	12 (12)	30%
Heavy Diesel Equipment Operator/Mechanics (HDEOMs)	20	2 (2)	10%
Instrumentation	11	3 (2)	27%
Industrial Electricians	11	4 (4)	36%
Combined 5 work sections	142	32 (36)	23%

There were 3 employee separations (retirements, resignations, and involuntary separations) in the 5 work sections from January to April 2013. During the same period 7 positions in these classifications were filled, including 2 rehires in Operations. The following chart illustrates the vacancy rate at a point during each six month period, and the number of separations during the corresponding six months. Currently we are showing a slight improvement in the combined vacancy rate for the five tracked job classifications, moving from 25% in the last report to 23%.



The staffing level for professional engineering classifications that support the RWF and the RWF capital improvement program (CIP) has held steady since the last report. There are 19 authorized engineer positions in these programs of which 5 are vacant, equating to a 26% vacancy rate for Plant/CIP engineering staff.

Overtime logged by Operators over the last 9 months has remained relatively stable at roughly 9 hours each week per Operator. The overtime trend has resulted in Operators covering the work of an additional 10 FTE.



EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Staff will continue to work with Human Resources, Office of Employee Relations and the City Manager's Office to identify and pursue ways to retain and recruit, critical wastewater facility staff.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Criterion 1: Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criterion 2: Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- Criterion 3: Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

This report does not meet the criteria above.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the Office of Employee Relations and the Department of Human Resources.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP10-069 (a) Staff Reports.

/s/

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Director, Environmental Services

For question please contact Kerrie Romanow, Director, Environmental Services Department, at (408) 535-8552.