

**ST. LOUIS COUNTY  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

Court House  
Duluth, Minnesota

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The St. Louis County Civil Service Commission met on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 1:30 P.M. in HR Conference Room 2, Ground Floor, Courthouse, Duluth, MN.

Members present: Ms. Julie Waltenburg, Member  
Mr. Alan Widell, Alternate

Others present: James Gottschald, Director, Human Resources and Administration  
Colleen Effinger, Human Resources Manager  
Megan Haworth, Human Resources Advisor  
Emily Masterson, Information Specialist III

1. Julie Waltenburg, Member, called the meeting to order.
2. A motion was made by Alan Widell and seconded by Julie Waltenburg to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2024, meeting as submitted.
3. The next item on the agenda under old business was the election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. It was decided to postpone the agenda item to a future meeting when all members can be present.
4. The next item on the agenda under new business was consideration of the revised classification specification for County Extension Administrator. Mary Tennis, Extension and Depot Director, proposed revising the class spec in preparation for an upcoming recruitment. The class spec was last updated in 2011, therefore the spec required several updates to standard language and statements. Additionally, updates were made to provide a more concise and accurate representation of the duties assigned to the position. The minimum qualifications of work were also revised to specify education and experience requirements. Lastly, Ms. Tennis requested that the current class spec title of County Extension Administrator be changed to County Extension Supervisor to reflect the authority and level of responsibility assigned to a front-line

supervisor. A motion was made by Alan Widell, seconded by Julie Waltenburg, and the revised class spec was unanimously approved.

5. The next item on the agenda under new business was consideration of the new classification specification for Emergency Management Specialist. Duane Johnson, Emergency Support Services Administrator of the Sheriff's department, requested the creation of an Emergency Management Specialist job class. There are two positions within the St. Louis County Emergency Management division – a Planner and an Emergency Operations Manager. The department took the opportunity to reflect on the current organizational structure of the department as the Planner position was recently vacated. The Planner class is used across multiple departments in the County and is a very broad, wide-ranging class. To depict the assigned work more accurately, and to provide a job title that aligns with Emergency Management industry standards within Minnesota, Mr. Johnson requested the Emergency Management Specialist job class be created. The class would replace the current Planner position and the assigned job duties would be more specific to the Emergency Management division. The new job class would assist with the functions of emergency and contingency planning to include ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local emergency management and homeland security mandates, program requirements, and grant programs. In addition, the position would assist in the organization of volunteer programs, emergency preparedness training and testing, and assisting with on-site support and command center organization. A motion was made by Alan Widell, seconded by Julie Waltenburg, and the new class spec was unanimously approved.
6. The next item on the agenda under new business was consideration of the new classification specification for Engineering Aide. Matthew Hemmila, Deputy Public Works Director, requested the creation of an Engineering Aide job class. Within the Engineering Technician career series, the current entry level class is Engineering Technician. To meet the minimum qualifications for this position, applicants must have two years of experience in the engineering field, or two years of education related to the field. Due to these requirements, Public Works has had difficulty recruiting for positions within the series. The

new Engineering Aide class would allow the department to accept applicants who do not possess any experience or education in engineering. The class would instead provide on-the-job training with the aim of preparing employees for advancement through the series. The class will perform routine manual and technical engineering tasks which include participating in surveys, assisting in construction project inspections, conducting routine field tests on construction materials, and performing entry level drafting to prepare plans and layouts. The minimum qualifications for the position are a high school diploma or its equivalent, and possession of a valid driver's license. A motion was made by Alan Widell, seconded by Julie Waltenburg, and the new class spec was unanimously approved.

7. The next item on the agenda under new business was consideration of the revised classification specification for Engineering Technician. Paul Kovach, Human Resources Senior Advisor for the Public Works department, proposed revising the Engineering Technician class spec. With the creation of the new entry level Engineering Aide class, Public Works wanted to create a path for incumbents within the class to advance within the Engineering Technician series. Therefore, the minimum qualifications of work were revised to include a path for individuals in the Engineering Aide class to advance after two years in the position and the recommendation of the department. The class spec was previously updated in 2023, therefore no additional updates were necessary. A motion was made by Alan Widell, seconded by Julie Waltenburg, and the new class spec was unanimously approved.
8. The next item on the agenda under new business was consideration of the revised classification specification for Service Center Specialist. Benjamin Martin, Service Center Manager, proposed revising the class spec specifically to update the minimum qualifications of work. Over the last several recruitments, the Service Center Specialist position saw a low number of applicants. In hopes of garnering more interest, Mr. Martin requested to remove the requirement of one year of clerical experience, and instead increase cash handling experience from two years to three. The experience requirements would continue to be commensurate to other job classes within the same pay grade, and the total experience required to meet minimum

qualifications will remain at three years. A motion was made by Alan Widell, seconded by Julie Waltenburg, and the new class spec was unanimously approved.

### DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

- Director Gottschald updated the Commission regarding the ongoing Minnesota legislative session and advised there are two bills the county continues to monitor. The first being a cleanup bill relating to the Earned Sick and Safe Time law that was passed during the 2023 legislative session. He stated it is imperative the county remains up to date with any changes or revisions to ensure compliance with the new law. Director Gottschald added the county has been working with professional associations to provide feedback regarding some of the language within the bill. He stated it was important the county contributes to a healthy, workable bill that is easy to adhere to for both public and private sectors. The second bill is the Social Work Title Protection bill which would require any person presenting themselves as a Social Worker to possess a baccalaureate degree in Social Work, which is particularly important as the county employs a large number of Social Workers. Director Gottschald stated a query was performed dating back to 2014, and of the 163 Social Workers that were hired, only about fifty percent possessed a degree in Social Work. He clarified that all employees did, however, meet both county and Minnesota Merit System requirements. He stated if the bill advances, it could potentially impact recruitment by creating a smaller pool of qualified candidates.
- Director Gottschald informed the Commission that the Duluth and St. Louis County Days at the Capitol were held on March 6 and 7. He stated some key legislative priorities the County was advocating for included maintenance bonding money for The Depot, funding for renovations to existing landfills, as well as funding for a proposed new regional landfill.
- Director Gottschald advised the Commission that he is in the process of scheduling an appeal related to an issue regarding higher starting salary upon appointment. He anticipates the appeal will be brought to the Commission by early April.

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, slightly slanted style.

James R. Gottschald  
Director of Human Resources and Administration