

# ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: September 11, 2018

Agenda Item No.: 12.C.

Council Action Date: September 17, 2018

**To: Honorable Mayor and City Council**

**From: Don Penman, Interim City Manager**  
**Kevin Brown, Ventura Water General Manager**

**Subject: Ventura Water Department Reorganization**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that City Council

- a. Approve the reorganization of Ventura Water with the addition of eight (8) new positions and two (2) position reallocations.
  - New positions - Assistant General Manager, Senior Civil Engineer, Environmental Services Specialist, Utilities Mechanic I/II, Laboratory Technician I, Plant Operator Trainee I/II/III (2), and Senior Engineering Technician.
  - Reallocations – Instrumentation and Electrical Technician and Management Analyst
- b. Authorize the Finance and Technology Department to make the necessary budget adjustments.

## **PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION**

October 4, 2010 – City Council approved the reorganization of the Public Works Department, including creation of the new Ventura Water Department.

**June 18, 2018 - City Council adopted the City Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-19 that includes the funding for a reorganization of Ventura Water.**

**DISCUSSION**

The Ventura Water priorities are focused on protecting the future of our existing water resource allocations, expanding our water supply portfolio, replacing or upgrading aged infrastructure, improving engagement with State and Federal agencies and elected officials, managing all aspects of the State’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), creating a long term water and wastewater strategic plan, adapting innovative business practices, improving consumer relations and maintaining positive relationships with all local water agencies.

Ventura Water needs to reallocate some positions and create additional positions in order to enhance services to rate payers, meet all the increased demands required to manage and execute a large Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) portfolio, comply with the requirements of SGMA management, manage increased State Water Contract engagement and oversight, meet the Tertiary Treated Flows (TTFs) Consent Decree requirements, internally manage operations more efficiently, provide workforce stability and meet the increased state requirements for water and wastewater regulations. In order to adequately respond to these increasing needs and demands of Ventura Water’s (Department) projects and workload, Ventura Water is requesting the following full-time employees (FTE) in accordance with the adopted Ventura Water Budget:

<b>Proposed New Classification</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>New/ Reallocate Position</b>
Assistant General Manager	1.0	New
Senior Civil Engineer	1.0	New
Environmental Services Specialist	1.0	New-Replacing a limited-term position
Utilities Mechanic I/II	1.0	New-Replacing a contractor
Laboratory Technician I	1.0	New-Replacing a part-time extra help position
Plant Operator Trainee/I/II/III	2.0	New-Replacing part-time extra help positions
Senior Engineering Technician	1.0	New-Replacing a part-time extra help position
Instrumentation and Electrical Technician	1.0	Reallocate- from Water Distribution Operator I/II
Management Analyst	1.0	Reallocate- from Water Distribution Operator I/II

The following information and justification is provided to support this request.

Assistant General Manager (1.0 FTE - NEW): To improve the structure and capacity of the Department’s ability to conduct strategic planning for future infrastructure projects, water resources management, water conservation and customer outreach, an additional Assistant

General Manager is needed. This position will lead the water resource planning division, water and wastewater master planning efforts, water conservation program, business development program and the customer outreach program. The position will lead a diverse team of 10-12 City employees and various consultants and contractor personnel. This position will oversee the \$600 million capital improvements program, of which \$225 million is directly linked to the TTFs Consent Decree; represent the City on five different water basin GSA's and Technical Advisory Committees; and work with Federal, State and NGO's on all aspects of water resources management and water funding policy. Estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$218,310, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Senior Civil Engineer (1.0 FTE – NEW): The original budgeted proposal included the addition of an Office Assistant I/II position; however, the department has re-evaluated that request and determined that a new Senior Civil Engineer position would more appropriately meet needs at this time. Ventura Water's adopted FY 2018-19 CIP for wastewater projects reflects an estimated cost of \$252,885,000 and water projects are estimated at \$196,731,000. Many of the projects require a high level of engineering work and are considered major engineering projects. The aggressive CIP schedule to design, construct and implement projects requires the addition of this position. Estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$146,222. The current budget contains \$63,674, which was originally budgeted for an Office Assistant position. Therefore, an additional \$82,548 is required to cover the additional cost for the Senior Civil Engineer position. The Department has indicated that the increase can be covered by Ventura Water operations reserve for FY 2018-19.

Environmental Services Specialist (1.0 FTE – NEW): Since 2014, a 1,000-hour temporary employee has provided support in the General Manager's office. In June 2016, the position was elevated to an 18-month limited term position. The new Environmental Services Specialist will replace the limited-term position supporting the state-mandated water conservation program which, according to the Governor's Executive Order, has become "the new California way of life". With proposed future water supply expansion projects including VenturaWaterPure (Potable Reuse), the State Water Project, and the implementation of Automated Metering Infrastructure, this position will be imperative to meeting state regulatory requirements. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$104,770, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Utilities Mechanic I/II (1.0 FTE – NEW): The Department has been utilizing a contractor for painting and coating services for many years. Unfortunately, they went out of business last year. This is an essential service needed to maintain the protective paint and coating on the wastewater equipment (exposed piping, tanks, etc.). Due to the unique exposure of the facility's equipment to corrosive sewer gases and ocean salt air, specialized coating and paint are required to be applied by a trained painter. This position would provide that service rather than obtaining another contractor. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$88,582, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Laboratory Technician I (1.0 FTE – NEW): The Water Reclamation Facility continuously employs part-time, limited term temporary help to assist in the water and wastewater lab. The Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) is increasing regulations and

requirements that call for more quality control and analytical processes. More analytical demands are being placed on the lab with water sampling of schools as well as increased process control sampling for the sewer collection system. Since 2015, sampling and testing requirements have increased by approximately 20%, yet additional staff has not been added to the lab. The addition of a full-time position (replacing temporary help) will provide needed analytical support in order to keep pace with increased regulations. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$105,539, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Plant Operator Trainee/I/I/III (2.0 FTE – NEW): The Department continues to utilize limited-term temporary help to assist the wastewater treatment operations staff. With the demands of an aging treatment plant, the increase in the “strength” of wastewater due to conservation levels, increasing regulatory limits, and the addition of special services and programs such as the Recycled Water Mobile Reuse Program, the day-to-day duties for operation of the facility have increased significantly. It has been very challenging to maintain full daytime staffing levels (there are two shifts) without the current temporary workers. The addition of the Plant Operator positions will allow the Department to hire more qualified staff to replace the temporary Plant Operator Trainees, thereby having a staff that is working at full capacity. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$222,090, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Senior Engineering Technician (1.0 FTE – NEW): The Department originally requested an Engineering Technician; however, after reviewing the job duties, Human Resources has recommended that the position be created at the Senior Engineering Technician level. Over the last 3 years, the Water Resources Division has been utilizing temporary extended-term employees to update the electronic water and wastewater maps. The challenge is that the maps require continual updating and refinements as water and sewer pipelines are continually being improved, expanded, replaced and modified. Historically, the City has not kept up with these changes, which has resulted in very costly inefficiencies in day-to-day operations, CIP design, support for Land Development projects, and master planning for the water and wastewater systems. Complete and accurate maps are necessary to run the hydraulic models that help determine and address system deficiencies, quickly locate and isolate leaking pipelines, troubleshoot and resolve water quality issues, and help avoid sanitary sewer overflows in the wastewater system. This is a full-time responsibility that could be fulfilled by adding a Senior Engineering Technician position. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$92,722, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Instrumentation and Electrical Technician (1.0 FTE – REALLOCATION from a Water Distribution Operator I/II): The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Division, which supports water and wastewater utilities, is currently staffed with only two technicians and one supervisor, who spends half his time in the field. This level of staffing is only adequate for serving a single small utility (not two large utilities). A work plan report provided by Lucity indicates that the SCADA Division should be staffed with 4.33 FTEs based on the current workload. There is an increasing amount of deferred maintenance and both systems are at risk of failure if the SCADA technicians do not proactively replace aging equipment. The addition of this position will allow staff to reduce the backlog and avoid deferral of maintenance. In addition, the position will assist with

incorporating SCADA into the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility over the next five years. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$20,127, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

Management Analyst (1.0 FTE – REALLOCATION from a Water Distribution Operator I/II): Current staffing levels are not adequate to address stringent water quality and safety regulations and new State mandates, such as the Lead in Schools program. This position will provide day-to-day management of such programs and requirements, update the Emergency Response Plan (ERP), develop and implement protocols to address low-chlorine and related water quality issues, and serve as project manager for special non-CIP projects. This position will support the Water Utility Division, which is the only division in the Department that does not currently have a Management Analyst position. The estimated cost for FY 2018-19 is \$29,508, which is already included in the Ventura Water budget.

**FISCAL IMPACTS**

The total annualized cost for the proposed reorganization is \$1,027,870, broken down as follows:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Proposed Classification</b>	<b>Included in FY 18-19 Budget</b>	<b>Not Included in FY 18-19 Budget</b>
52	Assistant General Manager	\$218,310	
52	Senior Civil Engineer (Note: Prior request was Office Assistant I/II)	\$63,674	\$82,548
52	Environmental Services Specialist	\$104,770	
	Utilities Mechanic I/II	\$88,582	
51	Laboratory Technician I	\$105,539	
51	Plant Operator Trainee/I/II/III (2)	\$222,090	
52	Senior Engineering Technician	\$92,722	
52	Instrumentation and Electrical Technician	\$20,127	
52	Management Analyst	\$29,508	
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$945,322</b>	<b>\$82,548</b>

The Department will have extra-help/temporary employee savings in the amount of \$146,700 and contractor savings in the amount of \$92,000. The pro-rated cost for these positions being filled in November is approximately \$685,247 less the Department savings results in a net fiscal impact of \$446,547 for FY 2018-19.

Funding for the proposed reorganization was included in Ventura Water’s FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget for both Water and Wastewater Funds in anticipation of City Manager approval. However, there is an additional cost of \$82,548 needed to cover the Senior Civil Engineer position that was originally budgeted as an Office Assistant. The additional cost

can be absorbed by Ventura Water's operations reserve for FY 2018-19 and/or through salary savings as the positions are likely not going to be filled until the first of November.

**ALTERNATIVES**

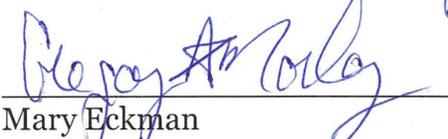
City Council could choose not to approve all or part of Ventura Water's proposed reorganization. However, Ventura Water will not be able to enhance services to rate payers, meet all the increased demands required to manage and execute a large CIP portfolio, comply with the requirements of SGMA management, manage increased State Water Contract engagement and oversight, meet TTFs Consent Decree execution requirements, internally manage operations more efficiently, provide workforce stability and meet the increased state requirements for water and wastewater regulations.

Prepared by Susan Rungren, Assistant General Manager, for:



Kevin Brown  
Ventura Water General Manager

Reviewed as to fiscal impacts



Mary Eckman  
Interim Finance and Technology Director

for

FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL



Don Penman  
Interim City Manager