

Memorandum

for the Board of Directors Meeting of July 12, 2017

TO: Members of the Board of Directors

FROM: Greg Jones, Assistant General Manager

DATE: July 6, 2017

SUBJECT: New Staff Position – Communications Specialist I / II

ADMINISTRATION

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the establishment of a new Communications Specialist I/II staff position as recommended by the Administrative Practices Committee on July 6, 2017.

BACKGROUND:

Staff has reviewed a new job description for a Communications Specialist for the Administration Department.

This action will create a permanent, full time position for a professional Communications Specialist I / II. This position will be responsible for a host of activities, including media relations, public information, communication strategies, press releases and community outreach.

The initial salary survey is benchmarking the position at the District's schedule/range A70 for I and A90 for II. In the past, a media consultant had been budgeted at \$60,000 annually.

This classification has been designated by the General Manager as belonging to the Unrepresented Professional unit. A job description was sent to AFSCME as a courtesy.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The impact to the District is estimated to be between \$45,697 - \$55,536 per year for A70 and between \$50,502 – \$61,380 per year for A90 in gross salary.

Attachments (1):
Communications Specialist I / II Position Description

NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Communications Specialist I Communications Specialist II Range A70/A90 – BOD 07/12/2017

Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in the class. Specifications are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

DEFINITION

To develop, direct, organize and implement a wide variety of activities in support of the District's communication strategy, media relations and public information plans, including but not limited to public relations campaigns; community outreach programs; and press release material for the District.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Communications Specialist I

Receives immediate supervision, direction and input from the Assistant General Manager

Communications Specialist II

Receives general supervision, direction and input from the Assistant General Manager

ESSENTIAL FUNCTION STATEMENTS

Essential and other important responsibilities and duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Essential Functions:

1. Develops, modifies and implements a comprehensive communication and outreach strategy for the District; manages goals and milestones as necessary to successfully meet objectives.
2. Plans, implements and participates in public information and public affairs programs in accordance with the District's goals and objectives; coordinates the dissemination of information to the NID customers, general public, communications media, public officials, governmental and non-governmental agencies, industry and businesses.
3. Analyzes and evaluates the public's interest and extent of understanding of District programs and services through surveys and other methods. Advises management regarding program and service understanding, acceptance and effectiveness.
4. Researches topics and manages the development of copy and graphics for internet and intranet web pages; reviews and updates design and layout of District public websites; develops media image and associated outreach efforts; reviews and manages the District's web portal.
5. Manages public outreach efforts; plans, arranges, coordinates and may speak at briefings, workshops, information sessions, conferences, community events and education and public hearings; develops and may implement emergency communication.
6. Research, write and edit press releases, newsletters, brochures, flyers and other material in support of the District's communication strategy.

NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Communications Specialist

7. Represents the District before the news media, public and private sector officials and administrative and legislative bodies on a variety of issues that impact the District's public awareness program.
8. May speak at workshops, panel discussions, educational groups, and other events.
9. Creates, disseminates and monitors all District social media accounts and commentary including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
10. Develops, cultivates and maintains local, regional and state-wide media connections
11. Develops, recommends and implements guidelines, regulations and procedures regarding District-wide print and electronic media such as brochures, articles, fact sheets, photographs, video, web pages, graphics, advertisements, news releases and other materials; works with managers and policy makers regarding web image, media image and conceptualizes approaches to enhance understanding and acceptance of District projects and programs; reviews materials prior to dissemination to the media, community, and employees; understands District's project and program portfolio and ensures accuracy, thoroughness and understanding of materials; ensures materials enhance the District's image.
12. Prepares correspondence in reply to inquiries from the public, general complaints, and suggestions relative to the District's programs and activities, consults with appropriate staff members to secure pertinent facts and information.
13. Prepares reports, newsletters, studies and other documents; may review or edit materials prior to dissemination; directs the maintenance of records and press clippings.
14. Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers, other District employees and the public using principles of good customer service.
15. Through outreach efforts, help create a positive working relationship for all who interact with NID.
16. Perform related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Communications Specialist I

Knowledge of:

1. Superior written communication skills in the English language including grammar, spelling, punctuation.
2. Effective public speaking and presentation skills in the English language with a variety of audiences including District staff, public and governmental agencies and members of the media.
3. Principles and practices of leadership, motivation, team building and conflict resolution.
4. Pertinent local, State and Federal rules, regulations and laws.
5. Modern office equipment including use of applicable computer applications.

Ability to:

1. Develop written content for internal and external dissemination in print and digital format.
2. Use advanced methods and equipment for producing pamphlets, presentations, documentation, website or video content.
3. Gain cooperation through discussion and collaboration.
4. Operate and use modern office equipment including a computer and applicable software.
5. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Communications Specialist

Responsibility to:

1. Obey safe work practices, procedures, and regulations including wearing protective equipment and safety devices.
2. Operate equipment in a careful and safe manner. Acknowledge the use of safeguards by other employees.
3. Report any removal, displacement, damage, destruction, or tampering of safety devices, safeguards, notices or warnings.
4. Report any safety risks or hazards to your supervisor or other management personnel.
5. Report to your supervisor or other management personnel any work assignment that you feel would require you to perform the work in an unsafe manner.

Communications Specialist II

In addition to the qualifications for the Communications Specialist I:

Knowledge of:

1. Effective public speaking and presentation skills in the English language with a variety of audiences including the District's Board of Directors, District staff, members of the public, community organizations, public and governmental agencies and members of the media.
2. Principles and practices of supervision, training and personnel management.

Ability to:

1. Analyze problems, identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions and implement recommendations in support of goals.

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION GUIDELINES

Any combination of experience and education that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Communications Specialist I

Experience:

One to two years of increasingly responsible experience in a public relations and/or communications role, preferably in a public sector utility.

Education:

A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in public relations, communications, journalism, or a related field.

License and Certificate:

Possession of a valid California driver's license.

NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Communications Specialist

Communications Specialist II

In addition to the qualifications for the Communications Specialist I:

Experience:

Five years of increasingly responsible experience in a public relations and/or communications role, preferably in a public sector utility.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Environmental Conditions:

Work is normally performed in a temperature controlled office environment subject to typical office noise. Some duties require field visits in an outdoor environment subject to outdoor conditions including extreme heat and cold and wet, humid conditions, fumes and/or airborne particles. Conditions include attendance at evening meetings and irregular hours as necessary to meet deadlines and achieve objectives as well as periodic travel.

Physical Conditions:

Essential functions may require maintaining physical condition necessary to sit at desk for long periods of time; bend, squat, climb, kneel and twist when performing field duties; intermittently twist to reach equipment surrounding desk; perform simple and power grasping and fine manipulation, pushing and pulling; use telephone; write or use a keyboard to communicate through written means; and lift or carry weight of 25 pounds or less.

Mental Conditions:

Essential functions may require maintaining mental condition necessary to write and edit technical and non-technical reports and media content; interpret and evaluate staff reports and related documents; know and interpret laws, regulations and codes.