

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, CA

SUBJECT: Approval of Class Specification for Public Safety Dispatcher

RECOMMENDATION

The Human Resources Director and the Civil Service Commission recommend approval of the proposed class specification of Public Safety Dispatcher.

FUNDING

Not required.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Service Commission at their meeting of December 12, 2005 approved the proposed class specification of Public Safety Dispatcher (Attachment A) which is submitted to your Honorable Body for your review and approval (Attachment B). Management has met and conferred with TME-AFSCME and received concurrence on the class specification.

ANALYSIS

The Public Safety Dispatcher operates communication systems utilizing radio, telephone and computer equipment to receive 911 emergency and routine calls requesting police or fire services; provides information to the public; dispatches safety personnel and equipment in response to service requests; and maintains records of activities in response to service requests.

The primary duties of the position are as follows:

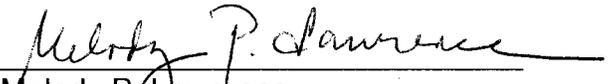
- Dispatches personnel to scene of reported incidents, or to back up personnel requesting assistance.
- Exercises considerable judgment in dispatching deployed units, emergency resources and equipment.
- Prioritizes emergency calls under direction to ensure that calls of a more urgent nature receive priority over other calls.
- Relays information, via multiple communications systems including radio, telephone and computers between citizens, City personnel and personnel of other agencies.

To qualify for the position, a typical combination of Education and Experience that provides the knowledge and skills required such as: Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. One year of experience in voice communications equipment or public contact work involving the use of communication equipment.

In addition, to successfully complete the probationary period, an incumbent must obtain and maintain a **valid** Public Safety Dispatcher Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) and Emergency Medical Dispatch certification within one (1) year of hire.

Respectfully submitted,
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Robert McPhail, Chair

ELAINE M. WINER
Human Resources Director

By 
Melody P. Lawrence
Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:


Elaine M. Winer
Human Resources Director

NOTED:


LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachments:

- A. Minutes of the Civil Service Commission Meeting, December 12, 2005
- B. Proposed Class Specification for Public Safety Dispatcher

December 12, 2005

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TORRANCE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Civil Service Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on December 12, 2005, in Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Doty, Herring, McPhail, Mitchell, Shwarts and Chairperson Brewer

Absent: Commissioner Marino

Also Present: Civil Service Manager Lewis
Human Resources Manager Lawrence

FLAG SALUTE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by special guests Kennedy and Carington Lewis.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. **Motion to Accept and File Affidavit of Posting**
Approved by combined motion.
- 1a. **Request for Excused Absence:** Commissioner Marino
Approved by combined motion.
2. **Request for Inactive Status:** Barbara Barker - Krank
Approved by combined motion.
3. **Request for Inactive Status:** Andrea Parungao
Approved by combined motion.
4. **Request for Inactive Status:** Donald Dale Powelson
Approved by combined motion.
5. **Ordering of Examination:** Claims Technician
Approved by combined motion.

MOTION: Commissioner Mitchell moved to approve, by combined motion, Consent Calendar Items 1 through 5. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shwarts and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Marino).

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

6. **Approval of Proposed Class Specifications in the Community Services Department**

Human Resource Manager Lawrence presented the material of record explaining that the Library and Parks and Recreation Departments have been consolidated into the

Civil Service Commission
December 12, 2005

Community Services Department. As part of the implementation, class specifications for the following positions have been revised and developed to reflect the new structure of the department: Community Services Director, City Librarian, Recreations Services Manager, Park Services Manager and Principal Librarian.

In response to an inquiry from Chairman Brewer, Human Resource Manager Lawrence stated that the above noted positions are occupied, with the exception of Principal Librarian which is a new position.

MOTION: Commissioner Herring moved to approve the Proposed Class Specifications in the Community Services Department. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Marino).

7. Approval of Proposed Class Specification for Public Safety Dispatcher

Human Resource Manager Lawrence reviewed the material of record stating that creation of this position is part of the implementation of the consolidated Public Safety Communications Center.

In response to inquiries from Chairman Brewer and Commissioners Mitchell and Doty, Human Resource Manager Lawrence clarified that union representation for these positions will fall under AFSCME; that cities may cross train fire and police dispatchers but each will handle their respective calls; that fire and police dispatchers will be housed in the same location; that mechanisms to evaluate these positions will be instituted; and that the City has looked at the South Bay Communication Authority.

Commissioner Doty suggested that the person assigned to supervise these positions should be a strong-willed individual.

MOTION: Commissioner Doty moved to approve the Proposed Class Specification for Public Safety Dispatcher. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Marino).

The Commission recessed at 7:14 to allow a meeting of the Employee Relations Committee.

The Commission reconvened at 7:16 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Civil Services Manager Lewis stated the Debra Mill's suspension hearing is scheduled to continue on January 23, 2006. She has spoken with Mr. Murphy about the possibility of change to the Commission due to Commissioner Shwarts' seat being up for reappointment in January. Mr. Murphy indicated that if a change was made in membership he would be request that the new member review the transcript and participate in the remainder of the hearing. Civil Services Manager Lewis questioned the feasibility as the time frame is limited and the transcripts involve two volumes of text. She will keep the Commission apprised of this matter.

Civil Services Manager Lewis announced that Senior Human Resource Analyst Kelli Lee will be leaving the City's employ. She shared that Kelly has been a valuable asset to the City, a tremendous friend and confidant to her, and will be sorely missed by all.

Civil Service Commission
December 12, 2005

Senior Human Resource Analyst Lee thanked the Commission for their understanding and support during her growth professionally and personally with the City, sharing that she takes only positive experiences and enrichments from her time here.

Civil Services Manager Lewis stated that Officer Tanabe's case has been concluded. She believes a future request for use of hearing officer is coming forth and would like the Commission to be aware of the financial implications of such use. The cost of utilizing a hearing officer is costly and has already impacted the budget.

Commissioner Shwartz talked of her love for Torrance and enjoyment in volunteering and participating in the City. She shared that she will be seeking reappointment, but given what has been happening she is unsure if she will in fact be reappointed.

Commissioner Shwartz also thanked Civil Services Manager Lewis for her honesty and heartfelt words regarding Kelli Lee's departure, adding that it has been a privilege to work with Ms. Lee.

Commissioner Doty wished everyone Happy Holidays!

Commission Mitchell conveyed to Kelli Lee that she will be missed and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Commissioner Herring wished Kelli Lee the best and expressed how blessed and grateful she is and we all are to live in this wonderful Country. Happy Holidays to all!

Commissioner McPhail thanked staff for the wonderful job they do and wished all a Happy New Year.

Chairman Brewer thanked staff for the wonderful holiday party. He wished Kelli Lee well and conveyed his best wishes for a Happy Holiday.

Noting the challenges of this year, Civil Services Manager Lewis shared how grateful she is to each of the commissioners and wished all a Happy New Year.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:35 p.m., there being no further business, Chairperson Brewer adjourned the meeting to Monday, January 9, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Approved as Submitted
January 9, 2006
s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk

Public Safety Dispatcher

Definition:

Under general supervision, operates communication systems utilizing radio, telephone and computer equipment to receive 911 emergency and routine calls requesting police or fire services; provides information to the public; dispatches safety personnel and equipment in response to service requests and to organize and coordinate the activities of field units; maintains records of activities in response to service requests; and performs related work as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is an entry/journey level class, distinguished from the Services Officer in that the incumbent is not responsible for enforcement of State laws and City ordinances. Assignments are generally limited in scope and are set within procedural frameworks established by higher level positions. As experience accrues, the incumbent performs with increasing independence. Work requires incumbent to exercise some judgment in selecting appropriate established guidelines to follow; significant deviations require prior approval. Interpretation of general administrative or operational policies is sometimes necessary.

Supervision Exercised/Received:

Receives general supervision from the Police Officer in Charge and/or the Public Safety Communications Supervisor, Police Sergeant or Police Lieutenant.

Examples of Essential Duties

The following duties represent the principal job duties however; they are not all-inclusive.

- Dispatches personnel to scene of reported incidents, or to back up personnel requesting assistance.
- Exercises considerable judgment in dispatching deployed units, emergency resources and equipment.
- Prioritizes emergency calls under direction to ensure that calls of a more urgent nature receive priority over other calls.
- Relays information, via multiple communications systems including radio, telephone and computers between citizens, City personnel and personnel of other agencies.
- Assists personnel in the field with information relating to: subjects (e.g., criminal and driving records, warrants, etc.); vehicles (e.g., wants and warrants); and property (e.g., guns and bicycles) in order for field personnel to determine the appropriate action to be taken.
- Constantly monitors resources in the field in order to determine location and status of personnel for service.
- Continually monitors and updates information and mapping systems showing present location of emergency vehicles and equipment and the status of vehicles and equipment as events occur.
- Monitors one or more frequencies as assigned.
- Receives incoming telephone calls for City Departments in order to screen emergency calls from routine business calls and forwards calls and messages to proper destination.

- Under the supervision of the Fire Department Area Coordinator assists with communication and coordination of resources in response to requests for mutual aid.
- Provides the public with emergency medical dispatch instructions and/or basic instruction to safeguard persons in hazardous conditions and medical emergencies prior to the arrival of emergency personnel.

Examples of Other Duties

The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties:

- Provides on-the-job training to newly hired Public Safety Dispatchers in dispatch procedures.
- Performs routine data entry as required.
- Performs related duties as required.

Minimum Qualification Guidelines

Knowledge of:

- Communication equipment in use by the City.
- Operations of computer-aided public safety dispatch systems.
- Emergency medical dispatch protocols.
- Standard radio and telephone communications receiving and transmitting equipment.
- Standard broadcasting procedures and rules.
- Public safety classification codes and computer codes.
- City policies and procedures affecting departmental operations.
- General City operations.

Ability to:

- Learn, perform and retain computer-aided dispatch and related software applications.
- Operate City communication equipment and telephone switchboard.
- Develop a working knowledge of City layout, streets, major businesses and emergency facilities.
- Retain, recognize and use coded dialogue used in radio transmission.
- Remain calm, control voice, and think quickly, logically and clearly in emergency situations.
- Adjust to changing situations and operations as they are occurring.
- Quickly assess a situation and take appropriate action under stressful and emergency conditions.
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with co-workers, other City employees, employees of other agencies and the public under normal working conditions and in emergency situations.
- Handle multiple tasks and priorities simultaneously.
- Comprehend and accurately give directions from a map and/or Thomas Guide.
- Understand and carry out complex oral and written directions.
- Speak clearly, concisely and distinctly.
- Keep accurate records.
- Work effectively and efficiently with a minimum of supervision.
- Act independently, exercise sound judgment within established guidelines and maintain confidentiality.
- Accurately use a computer keyboard by touch.

License or Certificate:

Must obtain and maintain a **valid** Public Safety Dispatcher POST and Emergency Medical Dispatch certification within one (1) year of hire.

Education and Experience:

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

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. One year of experience in voice communications equipment or public contact work involving the use of communication equipment.

Special Requirements

Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions:

Incumbents are frequently required to remain in the immediate work area throughout the work shift and may be ordered to work overtime with short notice.

Will be required to work various assigned shifts, including weekends and holidays.

Requires the ability to sit for extended periods of time, read color coded displays; use a computer terminal for extended periods; hear sufficiently to accurately and completely obtain information from callers; communicate clearly to effectively dispatch information over the radio/communication system. Tasks are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

Career Ladder Information

Experience gained in this classification may serve to meet the minimum requirements for promotion to Public Safety Communications Supervisor.

