



Board Report

File #: RES 21-119, **Version:** 1

Adopt a Resolution to:

- a. Amend Personnel Policies and Practices Resolution (PPPR) No. 98-394 Appendix A and B to create the classification of County Communications Director as indicated in Attachment A;
- b. Direct the Human Resources Department to implement the changes in the Advantage HRM system.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

Adopt a Resolution to:

- a. Amend Personnel Policies and Practices Resolution (PPPR) No. 98-394 Appendix A and B to create the classification of County Communications Director as indicated in Attachment A;
- b. Direct the Human Resources Department to implement the changes in the Advantage HRM system.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

During the past year, the County has responded to several catastrophic events including the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, 2020 wildfires, and 2021 winter storm events. During these catastrophic events, coordinating and disseminating timely and accurate information has been critical to ensure public safety. To aid in this endeavor, the Board of Supervisors created an ad hoc COVID Communications Committee intended to develop COVID-related communications/messaging strategy, and to guide staff in the dissemination of vital information to members of the public.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on areas for improvement related to the County's communication capabilities, which both the ad hoc COVID Communications Committee and staff feel must be addressed in both a short-term and a more long-term manner and recommend the creation of a County Communications Director that will plan, direct, and implement a comprehensive Countywide communications, community and government relations, crisis management, and media relations program. The County Communications Director will direct the overall communications and public information activities of the entire County; and will provide direction and oversight for all related functions and activities on behalf of the County Administrative Office and the Board of Supervisors.

The ad hoc committee requested the County Administrative Office (CAO) and Human Resources Department (HRD) to create the classification of County Communications Director for the reasons stated above regarding areas for improvement. Additionally, for an organization of our size and demographics, it is essential that a position of this level be created to ensure oversight for overall County communications and public information activities as directed by the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrative Officer.

The Human Resources Department conducted a classification and labor market study with our comparable agencies and identified multiple counties with classifications that are responsible for strategic County-wide communications. Therefore, the County Communications Director is recommended to be created with the salary range as indicated in Attachment A, based on the labor market average of our comparable agencies.

Due to the multiple catastrophic events and limited staff resources available to develop and disseminate messaging needed to respond to the overwhelming informational needs/demands of the community, the Board of Supervisor authorized the County Administrative Officer to bring on additional contractor-provided communications resources. After a process in which several firms were interviewed, TMD Creative of Salinas was selected to augment and help guide the County's communication efforts.

The TMD contract is currently set to expire at the end of December 2021. The County Communications Director position and funding was approved during the FY 2021-22 budget hearings and the recruitment will begin immediately. Once the position is filled, staff will reevaluate the TMD contract and report to the Board of Supervisors.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The County Administrative Office has reviewed and concurs with the recommendations.

FINANCING

There is no financial impact to the FY 21-22 budget in creating the classification. Annualized salary and benefits for FY 2021-22 could be up to \$245,627 depending on the step at which this position is filled. Funding for this position was approved during the FY 2021-22 budget hearings.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The proposed recommended actions address the Board of Supervisors Administration Strategic Initiative. The actions demonstrate the County's commitment to meeting the Board's initiatives in recruiting, retaining, and attracting a diverse, talented workforce that supports the mission of Monterey County.

- ☐ Economic Development
- ☒ Administration
- ☐ Health & Human Services
- ☐ Infrastructure
- ☐ Public Safety

Prepared by: Kim Moore, Assistant Director of Human Resources

Approved by: Irma Ramirez-Bough, Director of Human Resources

Approved by: Attachment A
Resolution