

**REPORT NO: 06-61**  
**DATE: May 15, 2006**  
**ANALYST: Betty J. Stanifer**

**CLASSIFICATION REPORT**

**PROPOSED TITLE:** Director, Budget Information and Coordination (Appointed)

**CURRENT TITLE:** Budget Coordinator (Appointed)

**INCUMBENT:** Tara Barenok

**REASON FOR REQUEST:** Evaluation of an Appointed position to ensure appropriate fit into the hierarchy due to changes in responsibilities delegated to the position and the request for a change of title.

**DATE QUESTIONNAIRE SUBMITTED:** 3-22-06

**DATE OF PREVIOUS STUDY:** 3-08-01

**DISPOSITION OF PREVIOUS STUDY:** Position moved from the Classified Service to the Appointed Service with no change in the 488 Total Points (Grade 10) when established in February 2000.

**PERSONS INTERVIEWED:** Heather Johnston; Director, Management and Budget (Appointed)  
Tara Barenok; Budget Coordinator (Appointed)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Establish Director, Budget Information and Coordination (Appointed), allocated to Grade 11 with 513 Total Points.

In 2000, the Finance Department was looking for a new way of providing more easily accessible, timely, and meaningful financial information to City Departments and management. To do this they merged financial planning, budgeting and accounting into one division headed by the Budget Director with five units under it. The Budget Coordination Unit was slated to work closely with the Director and other

units within the department to help coordinate the City's annual budget process. Responsibility included coordinating the process for developing, enhancing and maintaining the documents for the City's capital and operating budgets; for General Fund revenues, including Property Tax and other State revenues; and other projects and assignments as directed. Current responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following specific job duties.

- Advise the Mayor, Council and staff on financial decisions and financial aspects of policy decisions using knowledge of financial alternatives available to municipal governments and the adopted financial policies of the City.
- Respond to information requests from the public, the media and other interested parties using the City's information systems and judgment.
- Prepare summary publications and presentations for the public, elected officials and other non-financial audiences on the City's financial condition, to enhance understanding of how city government works.
- Lead and coordinate the work of the department on long-term financial projections for City enterprise providing department managers and elected officials information to make decisions.
- Assess changing financial conditions to include in financial projections so that elected officials may be advised in their decision making.
- Develop and communicate budget guidelines to staff throughout the enterprise to ensure optimal results from the budget process.
- Lead and coordinate cross functional staff and related efforts to achieve specific project goals to further enterprise goals and strategic directions (e.g., strategic planning work groups, budget system set-up, improvements to the budget process, etc.)
- Train and coach managers and supervisors on analytical and systems skills needed in the budget process to improve quality of financial information. Work with accounting staff to assist in managing disputes on budget issues with department managers.
- Develop and maintain the budget document to meet Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) standards and effectively communicate to management, elected leadership and the public.
- Manage and negotiate contracts related to the budget process and related efforts to improve the City's performance cycle.

## **POSITION ANALYSIS**

Major changes indicated in the duties and responsibilities include the training/coaching of finance and accounting managers and their staff; responsibility for all aspects of the budget process; enterprise wide long-term financial planning; direct support to elected officials; and managing the work of Financial Analyst on a project basis. Each factor is being reviewed to ascertain the need for adjustments in the levels assigned due to these changes.

## **PRE-REQUISITE KNOWLEDGE**

The Finance Department is requiring that candidates applying for the position have a Bachelor's Degree in Public Affairs, Accounting, Business Administration or a related field and five years of progressively responsible government or large enterprise experience in analysis and planning or a

Master's Degree in Public Affairs, Accounting, Business Administration or a related field with three years of progressively responsible government or large enterprise experience in analysis and planning.

The ideal candidate would have considerable knowledge of government finance and operations; knowledge of professional standards – GFOA, ICMA; and knowledge of information management – understanding of data sources and their weaknesses, possibilities for improvement, links between data sources and how data becomes information for decision making. The individual hired would need excellent project management skills; analytical skills; research skills; creative skills; interpersonal skills; negotiation skills; presentation skills; and oral and written communication skills. He/she will be required to exercise good judgment independently; be flexible and have the ability to see opportunities for improvement that cross departmental silos; have the ability to work with people from a variety of backgrounds; etc.

In comparing the position to the Director, Budget; staff found that it would not need the in-depth knowledge that is required in that position, nor would it be faced with the same levels of complexity. The Director, Budget is viewed as one of the most difficult positions in the Finance Department since the financial health of the City resolves around the budget process. Nor would the rating assigned here be as high as what is assigned the Director, Capital and Debt Management or the Director, Managerial Accounting and Budget. However, with the additional responsibilities that are delegated to the position, the knowledge requirements for entry into the proposed position are broader and more in-depth than what was required of candidates for the Budget Coordinator. The rating assigned here would be comparable to that of the obsolete Strategic and Business Planning Coordinator, which required similar pre-requisites for entry into the position. A rating of 60 is being assigned.

## **DECISIONS AND ACTIONS**

This position will work with minimal supervision and have considerable independence in coaching managers on budget duties; guiding Enterprise efforts; setting up Enterprise budget systems (salary and wage assumptions, reviewing the work of others in setting budget, etc.); ensuring the City's compliance with Truth in Taxation statute; giving background on financial issues to the media and citizens; detailing calculations involved in the City's financial projections, etc. Problems handled most frequently without supervisory input would include problems with the budget database; problems with vendors of professional services; issues with department position allocations and appropriations; and providing advice on financial decisions to elected officials.

Budget guidelines, which include enterprise wide instructions on the Mayor and Council's budget processes; Budget document publication, which includes presentation of financial information for general and City audiences, documentation of major priority decisions made by elected officials, and legal appropriation levels; certification of the City's tax levies; and advice given to elected officials are reviewed/approved by the Director, Budget.

The position will be working with more independence than it did as a Budget Coordinator due to the expanded area of decision making. The area of decisions and actions, however, would not be as broad as that of the position that it reports to; the Director, Budget runs a staff function that is viewed as a source of unbiased professional analysis and makes recommendations that is subject to intense scrutiny.

Further the Director, Budget has ultimate responsibility for the actions of positions reporting to it. Nor would the area of decisions and actions be comparable to what is experienced by the directors Managerial Accounting and Budget or Financial Operations; the financial impact caused by error in these positions would be significant. The position under evaluation's independence of action would be similar to that of the Strategic and Business Planning Coordinator, although the areas of responsibility differ. A rating of 55 is being applied.

## **SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY**

The position as proposed currently will not have supervisory responsibility. No points are being assigned on this factor.

## **RELATIONSHIPS RESPONSIBILITY**

The incumbent in the proposed position will have daily contacts within the Finance Department with the supervisor to manage workload and receive work direction; with all Financial Analysts to coordinate projects and give direction on tasks assigned; with the Controller to coordinate and advise; with the Finance Officer for business planning and to advise on financial information; with Finance/Accounting Managers and Accountants for information sharing, coaching and training; and with Financial Systems staff to coordinate tasks and project management. Relationships experienced with other departments are on a weekly to monthly basis and include department analysts, Council and Mayor's staff to give advice and for information sharing; with department managers for decision support, advice and information sharing; and with BIS/Unisys representatives on systems management. There will be weekly contacts with the Mayor, Council Members, City Coordinator, and Department Heads on the budget process, for decision support, for executive committee, and for information sharing.

The position will have less frequent contacts with media representative and citizens to share financial information, for financial inquiries and for presentations.

Whether the contacts experienced by this position are on a frequent or infrequent basis; the key element is to establish and maintain effective relationships that inspire trust and support. The rating assigned here should be similar to other positions in the system that have relationships on an enterprise wide basis to provide information, facilitate discussion, receive and give feedback and make recommendations.

The contacts experienced by the position under evaluation would be higher than those experienced by positions that work in a non-political environment. Staff does not feel that the impact would be as great as what is experienced by the Director, Development Finance, which has frequent contacts with policy officials and peers that require a high degree of political sensitivity in handling complex financial issues. But the proposed position warrants a slightly higher rating in this area than the Director, Treasury who has a broad range of contacts, yet these contacts are primarily for exchange of information. The rating assigned here would be more in line with that of the Strategic and Business Planning Coordinator. A rating of 65 is being assigned.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

The position works in a normal office setting with daily exposure to computers. The position is being assigned the rating that is historically given to positions that work under these conditions. A rating of 20 is being applied.

## **EFFORT**

There are continual time pressures and deadlines that are driven by budget processes, project related deadlines, responsiveness to department and elected officials. Further, there is added mental stress in working in a politically sensitive environment. A rating equivalent to what is assigned Finance positions that exert similar effort is warranted. A rating of 60 is being applied on this factor.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the Director, Budget the proposed position meets the criteria for appointed positions under the Minneapolis Code of Ordinance, Section: 20.1010 as follows:

- 1. The person occupying the position must report to the Head of the designated City Department or the designated City Department Head's Deputy.**

The position reports to the Director, Budget who in turn reports directly to the City Finance Officer.

- 2. The person occupying the position must be a part of the designated Department Head's Management Team.**

During the City budget process, this position is part of the designated Department Head's Management Team.

- 3. The duties of the position must involve significant discretion and substantial involvement in the development, interpretation or implementation of City or department policy.**

The position assists in the development of City budget policies, as well as assists in or leads the interpretation and implementation of those policies.

- 4. The duties of the position must not primarily require technical expertise where continuity in the position would be significant.**

Although some technical expertise is required to perform the duties of this position, the position is not primarily technical in nature.

- 5. There is a need for the person occupying the position to be accountable to, loyal to, and compatible with the Mayor, City Council and the Department Head.**

The person occupying the position must be able to work with all elected and department leadership.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Establish Director, Budget Information and Coordination (Appointed), allocated to Grade 11 with 513 Total Points.