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WATER POLLUTION CONTROL

MEMORANDUM

To: Gregg Mandsager, City Administrator

Cc: Nancy Lueck, Finance Director  
Stephanie Romagnoli, Human Resources

From: Roger Kirby, Director WPCP

Date: July 10, 2012

Re: Staffing Issue

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**INTRODUCTION:** In July 2011 we changed our Plant Operations to a five operator, 10 hour rotating schedule. The plant has operated very well and we are still implementing new equipment and processes. We have found the schedule works very well without manning the plant twenty four hours a day. We feel with the upcoming change in staffing (i.e., my retirement in December), we have a need to have a Lead Operator to provide much needed daily leadership and direction to the Operations group. This will allow us to meet with a Lead Operator on a daily basis Monday –Friday and have the other four operators work on a rotating schedule. We have spent a considerable amount of time obtaining information from other plants that work with this kind of schedule. Iowa City operates with this schedule and has had great success since 2006.

**BACKGROUND:** Jon Koch was hired as the Assistant Director and Environmental Coordinator with the goal of having Jon be totally involved and on board with the renovation of the plant and be able to move into the director's position when I retire. He has obtained a Grade IV License with the IDNR which is a requirement for the director's position. This has worked very well and Jon has determined an assistant director will not need to be hired when I do retire. Also, with changes in public works, some of the duties originally delegated to Jon in stormwater and FOG will be shared by both departments. Jon is confident the duties related to pre-treatment and waste haulers can be handled with existing staff using the chemist and new Lead Operator. An Environmental Coordinator may still be needed to coordinate departments and handle any other environmental issues that may occur. Wages have been budgeted for the Director and Assistant Director for the entire fiscal year of 2012-2013, so wages will be easily covered changing an operator from a Pay Grade 15 to Pay Grade 18 where all other Lead Workers are located on the pay schedule.

**RECOMMENDATION/RATIONALE:** Staff has considered all options and feels by elevating one of our operators to a Lead Operator's position we will be implementing the best and most economical way of operating the plant. We will be requiring at least a Grade III Wastewater License or the ability to attain a Grade III within six (6) months to be eligible for this position. We currently have two operators that qualify and will give incentive for other operators to improve themselves. All other operators have a Grade II License which is the minimum required for running a plant like ours. It is important to have a Lead Operator that is the liaison for communications with the operators and also work closely coordinating with the lab, lift station, and maintenance personnel. The duties of the operators have changed considerably with the renovation. New equipment and controls require the operators to actually operate the plant instead of basically just monitoring the plant as they have done in the past. This also allows us to operate in the most efficient manner, saving energy and labor costs. I am requesting we implement the Lead Operator as early as possible. Please include this item on the council agenda for the July 19, 2012 meeting for their approval. Please let me know if you need any other information.