

June 29, 2011

TO: Teresa Parsons, SPHR
Director's Review Program Supervisor

FROM: Kris Brophy, SPHR
Director's Review Program Investigator

SUBJECT: Wanda Connochie-Vernon v. Everett Community College (EvCC)
Allocation Review Request ALLO-11-004

Director's Determination

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to July 28, 2010, the date EvCC Human Resources (HR) received Ms. Connochie-Vernon's request for a position review. As the Director's Review Investigator, I carefully considered all of the documentation in the file, the exhibits presented during the Director's review conference, and the verbal comments provided by both parties. Based on my review and analysis of Ms. Connochie-Vernon's assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude her position is properly allocated to the Budget Analyst 2 classification.

Background

On January 18, 2011, EvCC HR received a Position Review Request form from Ms. Connochie-Vernon and her supervisor, asking that her position be reallocated to the Budget Analyst 3 (Exhibit B-1).

By letter dated January 27, 2011, EvCC notified Ms. Connochie-Vernon that her position was properly allocated as a Budget Analyst 2 (Exhibit A-2).

On February 2, 2011, the Department of Personnel received Ms. Connochie-Vernon's letter of appeal requesting a Director's review of EvCC's allocation determination (Exhibit A-1).

On May 11, 2011, I conducted a Director's telephone review conference. Present during the conference were Wanda Connochie-Vernon; Suanne Streby, Budget Director, EvCC and Ms. Connochie-Vernon's supervisor; and Linda Nichols, Human Resource Consultant, EvCC.

Ms. Streby submitted additional information following the review telephone conference on May 26, 2011. Ms. Streby submitted revised information on June 23, 2011. This information has been added to the record and incorporated as an exhibit to the file.

Rationale for Director's Determination

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Duties and Responsibilities

Ms. Connochie-Vernon independently provides budget and program planning analysis and support to the EvCC Budget department. She assists the Budget Director in setting up operating budgets for the college, monitors accounts to alert of over spending, conducts budget forecast and other budget support activities for the College. She reports directly to Suanne Streby, Budget Director for the College. She provides daily administrative budget consultation and support to College departments across campus.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon describes her assigned duties and responsibilities in the PRR as follows:

- 30% Provide detailed analysis for all college departments and grants as requested. Consult with budget authorities to provide analysis services and budget plans to management and staff. Some recent examples of this are:
- Provided VP accounting and budget information for 3 to 4 years prior and set up spreadsheets to analyze the figures.
 - Monitored and prepared a list of accounts that should be inactive for VP of Student Services and Instruction
 - Prepared for VP of Student Services and Instruction a database showing over expenditures by department including budget authorities (this is 80% of the college's nearly 1,000 accounts).
 - Provided the Budget Director and VP's accounting and budget information for 3 to 5 years prior and set up spreadsheets to analyze the figures to prepare for cost benefit analysis and budget reduction scenarios
 - Provided the Budget Director with historical data for the Long Range Financial Plan.
 - Set up procedures to calculate and submit payroll transfers for the Senior Associate Faculty.
- 30% Work directly with budget director on the budget development process from January through June each fiscal year. This includes salary and benefit estimates, code checking for accuracy and inputting data as it is submitted by the departments. Many times formats submitted vary and much decision making and consulting with originating departments and/or VP is required to get input accurate. I've created a spreadsheet we use to directly upload into the FMS budget system thereby reducing the duplication of effort that previously existed.
- 10% Coordinate directly with the Budget Director, VP's and budget authorities providing them with specific data and explanations so they can coordinate budget and program planning for their departments. I prepare reports accessing and massaging the data into a format

for their easy understanding and make suggestions to help manage the accounts. Department personnel phone asking me to help set up budgets and how to read reports and interpret the accounting and budget systems, procedures and processes to administer their accounts. When there is a new position or replacement position, departments phone me to work out the cost of wages and benefits.

- 10% Monitor the semi-monthly payroll charged to the accounts in the FMS system, to make sure they are charged to the correct accounts and the benefits are charged to the correct account. The payroll system does not always assign benefits in coordination with salary charges and must be checked manually. Create payroll transfers as needed. Monitor all accounts for discrepancies and unusual activity. Recommend measures to improve fiscal responsibility.
- 8% In the absence of the Budget Director, (Wednesdays and Fridays and the month of August), I am the sole budget person for decision making.
- 7% Do downloads every day from DATAX to an access database I have set up to monitor the accounts. I create the database used by the entire accounting department. I also update the database for the intranet, the online web budget for the college. I maintain the Budget Authorities and close the accounts for the online web budget system, enter new accounts into the system. Set up a system to monitor the application from the state board, update each month for the Director of Budget. At the end of the year monitor to make sure all allocation funds are closed out.
- 5% Inform other fiscal and clerical staff in Accounting, Financial Aid, Payroll and Grant departments of problems and guide them to solutions. Often times this means alerting them to problems they have failed to identify. A good example of this was the incorrect posting of Work Study students from financial aid into payroll and FMS system. Financial aid and payroll did not know what was wrong or how to fix. I researched the problem and found the solution.

Ms. Streby acknowledged in the Supervisor's Review section that Ms. Connochie-Vernon's description of work provided in the PRR is accurate and complete. Ms. Streby believes Ms. Connochie-Vernon's position should be reallocated to the Budget Analyst 3 class. Ms. Streby stated during the telephone review conference that because she only works three days a week, Ms. Connochie-Vernon has been delegated responsibility for monitoring all the grants which equal approximately \$11 million in funds. Ms. Streby stated that Ms. Connochie-Vernon has delegated authority within established policies and procedures to make decisions on how to move or allocate funds or otherwise help her clients based on the rules. For example, if a grant is overspent she can help them transfer money from one allowable account to another.

Summary of Ms. Connochie-Vernon's Perspective

Ms. Connochie-Vernon asserts her position performs senior-level Budget Analyst functions for the College including developing long range budget plans, providing consultative planning and analysis services to management and staff; coordinating with the Budget director to provide specific information to coordinate program and budget planning; developing cost estimates and forecasts for major programs; and following-up with division management to ensure compliance. Ms. Connochie-Vernon believes her duties and responsibilities are best described by the Budget Analyst 3 classification.

Summary of EvCC's Reasoning

EvCC contends that Ms. Connochie-Vernon's performs some higher level duties and is close to meeting the requirements of the Budget Analyst 3; however her position is properly allocated as a Budget Analyst 2.

Class Specifications

When comparing the assignment of work and level of responsibility to the available class specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing characteristics are primary considerations.

The Class Series Concept for the Budget Analyst class states, in part, the following:

Positions in this series perform budget analysis duties in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) regulations. This series uses and modifies complex computer budget models to make budget projections and allotments in developing and administering an agency's or institution's operating or capital budget.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon's position includes responsibility for performing independent budget and program planning analysis within the Budget Office for EvCC. Her position fits within the scope of the Budget Analyst class series.

Both the Budget Analyst 2 and 3 classes include work reviewing and analyzing Budget data. There are no distinguishing characteristics identified in either class. As a result, the Definitions are the primary allocating factors for these classes.

Comparison of duties to Budget Analyst 3

The Definition for Budget Analyst 3 (BA 3) reads, in part, as follows:

This is the senior, specialist, and lead worker level of the series. Positions function as a senior level budget program analyst for an agency or major program of an agency or institution. Positions may also lead other budget, fiscal, or clerical staff involved in budget program analysis requiring broad knowledge of institutional and state accounting and budget procedures. Develops long range capital project and budget plans.

The Budget Analyst 3 is described as a senior-level position. The Department of Personnel's (DOP's) Glossary of Classification Terms defines senior-level as follows:

...The performance of work requiring the consistent application of advanced knowledge and requiring a skilled and experienced practitioner to function independently.

Senior level work includes devising methods and processes to resolve complex or difficult issues that have broad potential impact. These issues typically involve competing interests, multiple clients, conflicting rules or practices, a range of possible solutions, or other elements that contribute to complexity. The senior level has full authority to plan, prioritize, and handle all duties within an assigned area of

responsibility. Senior level employees require little supervision and their work is not typically checked by others.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon's position does not fully reach the overall scope of responsibility of a senior level budget analyst as stated in the definition for this class.

The Definition describes positions which require broad knowledge of institutional and state accounting and budget procedures. Incumbents develop long range capital project and budget plans. Ms. Connochie-Vernon does not have this overall level of responsibility. She does not independently develop long range budget plans. Her duties are more appropriately described as being supportive in nature to this function. In the PRR, Ms. Connochie-Vernon states that she provided the Budget Director with historical data for the Long Range Financial Plan. This does not encompass the broader scope of responsibility for developing and completing the report which includes responsibility for gathering and analyzing data, developing findings and recommendations, and submitting the final report. Ms. Streby stated during the call that responsibility for completing the report rested with higher level staff within the Vice President for Administrative Services office. Ms. Connochie-Vernon's responsibilities included gathering and providing data and information to the higher level staff. This limits her overall level of responsibility in this area.

Although the Typical Work examples do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the level and scope of work performed by that class. The typical work statements describe conducting detailed analysis for all assigned programs and providing consultative planning and analysis services to management and staff. Positions coordinate with the Budget director to provide specific information to coordinate the program and budget planning process. They guide lower level budget specialists, fiscal, and support staff in the development of caseload and cost estimates and forecasts in one or more major programs. They develop cost estimates and forecasts for major programs and follow-up with division management to ensure compliance with program changes as they occur.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon conducts budget analysis for assigned programs and provides consultative services to division management and staff, primarily for grants. However the scope of her performance in this function is more narrowly defined than anticipated by this class. Ms. Connochie-Vernon stated during the review conference that each grant is different and they have to be analyzed for salaries and benefits. She stated she provides salary and benefits data, monitors expenditures, and assists program managers with year-end close out activities. She transfers charges between accounts upon request by the department. She also assists budget authorities and program managers in understanding their budgets and budget status reports. The overall scope and level of responsibility of these duties are more appropriately described within the Budget Analyst 2 class.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon does coordinate directly with the budget director to provide specific information and knowledge to achieve coordinated program and budgeting planning for grants and contracts, and to a lesser degree with the operating budget. During the review conference, Ms. Connochie-Vernon stated she analyzes and compares budget allocations with past trends to project future outcomes for budget planning purposes. She also routinely meets with Ms. Streby to discuss ongoing administrative issues.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon does not have responsibility for guiding lower level budget specialists, fiscal, and support staff in the development of caseload and cost estimates and forecasts in one

or more major program areas. She does not prepare reports which include findings, conclusions, and recommendations for improvement of agency operations.

She does ensure that follow-up service is provided to divisional management to ensure compliance with indicated program changes.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon performs a variety of budget analysis and reporting tasks. A portion of Ms. Connochie-Vernon's position duties reaches aspects of the work described at the BA 3 level. However, the overall scope of responsibility, the complexity and majority of her duties, and the level of analysis and decision-making authority assigned to her position does not reach the Budget Analyst 3 class definition. For these reasons her position should not be reallocated to that class.

Comparison of duties to Budget Analyst 2

The Budget Analyst 2 Definition reads as follows:

This is the journey, working, or occupational level of the series. Positions at this level perform independent budget and program planning analysis. Incumbents are expected to perform a wide range of responsibilities within the budget division or office in program planning, management methods, and budget analysis.

DOP's Glossary of Classification Terms defines ***Journey-level*** and ***General supervision*** as follows:

Journey-level – Fully competent and qualified in all aspects of a body of work and given broad/general guidance, can complete work assignments to standard under minimal supervision. Also referred to as the *working or fully qualified* occupational level.

General supervision – Recurring assignments are carried out within established guidelines without specific instruction. Deviation from normal policies, procedures, and work methods requires supervisory approval, and supervisory guidance is provided in new or unusual situations. The employee's work is periodically reviewed to verify compliance with policies and procedures.

While a portion of Ms. Connochie-Vernon's position duties reaches aspects of the work described at the BA 3 level, the level of functions she performs and the majority of her duties as a whole are more in line with Budget Analyst 2 level work. This includes the following:

- Ms. Connochie-Vernon conducts complex planning and budget analysis for ongoing programs, particularly grants and contracts. She analyzes, gathers and reports budgetary information and recommends appropriate courses of action to the Budget Director, the Vice President of Administrative Services and budget authorities. She provides data and background to coordinate program and budget planning with budget authorities, providing them with specific data and explanations to assist with budget planning.

- She analyzes State Board Allocations for existing and proposed programs and determines appropriate budget modifications. She prepares spreadsheets, and other budgetary reports as necessary (Exhibit A-3, Attachment 1-4).
- Ms. Connochie-Vernon works directly on the budget development process by developing salary and benefit estimates, checking budget codes for accuracy, and inputting data submitted by the departments. Ms. Connochie-Vernon created a spreadsheet to directly upload information into the FMS budget system.
- Ms. Connochie-Vernon assists departmental personnel with setting up grant and contract budgets and provides explanations and assistance in reading budget reports and following policies and procedures. When new positions or replacements are created she assists departments in determining the cost of wages and benefits and how to allocate those funds appropriately.
- Ms. Connochie-Vernon develops databases and spreadsheets to track and monitor information. She consults with budget authorities to provide analysis services and budget plans to management and staff.

Ms. Connochie-Vernon independently performs a variety of budget analysis, monitoring and reporting duties that include generating and analyzing salaries and benefits, reviewing and verifying budget program accounts for EvCC and resolving any discrepancies, and providing accurate information and recommendations to the Budget Director, Vice Presidents, and program managers to assist them in making budgetary decisions. The Budget Analyst 2 and 3 classes both include work that involves reviewing and analyzing Budget data. However, the majority of her work assignments more closely align with the journey level work described above. Ms. Connochie-Vernon is fully competent and qualified in independently performing Budget duties under the general supervision of the Budget Director.

The Budget Analyst 2 typical work examples more closely align with the scope of her duties and responsibilities including:

- Reviews program allotment requests and position actions; recommends program approval, modifications, or disallowance based on established program plans, fiscal or policy considerations;
- Monitors budget control procedures for compliance with established policies; ensures effectiveness through judicious budget application and management;
- Analyzes proposed legislation which affects present and proposed programs; makes recommendations based on agency's plans and fiscal policies;
- Conducts complex planning and budget studies of ongoing and proposed programs and areas; recommends alternate courses of action to higher level budget officers and division managers; provides data and background to coordinate program and budget planning;
- Prepares and presents complex caseload and/or expenditure forecasts for budget or other management purposes;
- Develops cost estimates and forecasts of programs;

- Directs the review of program allotment requests and position actions and recommends approval, modification, or disapproval of requests and positions based on established program plans and fiscal or policy considerations;
- Maintains a computerized data processing program which will provide immediate analysis of the type of facilities, location, cost, and user requirements;
- Explains accounting and budgeting systems, procedures and processes.

In Salsberry v. Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-06-013 (2007), the Personnel Resources Board addressed the concept of *best fit*. The Board referenced Allegrì v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. ALLO-96-0026 (1998), in which the Personnel Appeals Board noted that while the appellant's duties and responsibilities did not encompass the full breadth of the duties and responsibilities described by the classification to which his position was allocated, on a best fit basis, the classification best described the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities of his position.

A position's allocation is not a reflection of performance or an individual's ability to perform higher-level work. Rather, it is based on the majority of work assigned to a position and how that work best aligns with the available job classifications. Based on the level and scope of the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to Ms. Connochie-Vernon's position, the Budget Analyst 2 classification is the best fit.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911. ***If either party plans to hand-deliver or fax an appeal to the PRB, please note the following changes:***

Through July 15, 2011, you may file in person at ***600 South Franklin***, Olympia, Washington. Fax number (360) 753-0139.

Beginning July 18, 2011, you may file in person at ***521 Capitol Way South***, Olympia, Washington. Fax number (360) 586-4694. For questions, please call (360) 664-0388.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

c: Wanda Connochie-Vernon, EvCC
Suanne Streby, EvCC
Linda Nichols, EvCC
Lisa Skriletz, DOP

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

Wanda Connochie-Vernon v. Everett Community College
ALLO-11-004

List of Exhibits

A. Wanda Connochie-Vernon Exhibits

1. Letter requesting Director's Review for Wanda Connochie-Vernon received by DOP on February 2, 2011.
2. Copy of allocation determination letter from Linda Nichols to Wanda Connochie-Vernon dated January 27, 2011.
3. Typical Work samples for Wanda Connochie-Vernon submitted by email from Suanne Streby to Kris Brophy dated June 23, 2011 with the following attachments:
 1. SBCTC Allocation
 2. Preliminary Analysis of attachment 1 in simpler format.
 3. Allocation FMS match, comparing EvCC information to the SBCTC allocation.
 4. Spreadsheet to monitor salaries and benefits.
 5. Quarterly revenue update comparison.
 6. 5 year Summary of Grants for VP of Administrative Services.
 7. 5 year Summary of Student Services section Accreditation Report for VP of Student Services.
 8. Comparison of Part-time Faculty by type, VP, and department.
 9. Comparison of Part-time Faculty for V.P. of Instruction.
 10. 5 Year General Fund Comparison.

B. Everett Community College Exhibits

1. Position Review Request form for Wanda Connochie-Vernon's position with completed supervisor's section, received by HR on January 18, 2011.
2. Position Description for Wanda Connochie-Vernon's position dated July 31, 2010.
3. Linda Nichol's audit notes dated January 24, 2011.
4. Organization Chart for Administrative Services (September 2010)

C. Class Specifications

1. DOP Class Specification for Budget Analyst 2 (147B).
2. DOP Class Specification for Budget Analyst 3 (147C).