



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Council Session

Item I-1

#2015-131 - Consideration of Approving Amendment to Finance Personnel FTE Budget Allocation

Staff Contact: William Clingman, Interim Finance Director

Council Agenda Memo

From: William Clingman, Interim Finance Director

Meeting: May 12, 2015

Subject: Approving Amendment to Finance Personnel FTE Budget Allocation

Item #'s: I-1

Presenter(s): William Clingman, Interim Finance Director

Background

The Finance Department for the City of Grand Island is responsible for all accounting and finance functions throughout the City. In 1996 the department had an FTE count of 31 (excluding the IT department) and currently the department has an FTE count of 25.25 (excluding the IT department). Some of this reduction can be tied to the achievement of greater efficiencies within the department. For example, moving from manual general ledger journal entries to a financial software package that allows for entry and tracking of these electronically. Other reductions were primarily a consequence of budget constraints placed on the City during the mid to late 2000's. These reductions are primarily impacting the department with inadequately consistent coverage for all the responsibilities of the Finance Department. The secondary consequences are low morale and lower productivity within the department. Finally, it is preventing the department from utilizing everybody to the best of their abilities.

Discussion

The primary goal of reorganizing the Finance Department is to achieve an adequate staffing level. This would ensure constant coverage of duties and reduce the frequency at which overtime occurs. Finally, it would reduce overtime and normalize the work schedule for staff.

In order to achieve optimal staffing 2 new FTEs and 2 changes to existing FTEs are needed. This would also coincide with a restructuring of the department's organizational chart. These FTEs and the restructuring would efficiently align responsibilities within the department and better utilize the skills of staff within the department.

The additional FTEs would consist of a Customer Service Team Leader and Accountant. The Customer Service Team Leader would directly manage the customer service team. With a growing City this will assist in proactively addressing problems as well as driving accountability for tasks within the customer service group. It will also give customers a point of contact for quick issue resolution. Finally, the new positions will provide the needed secondary coverage for several positions within the operations group of the department. The new Accountant would be responsible for financial oversight of all funds outside of the electric and water funds, 520 and 525 respectively. The new Accountant would also manage a team whose responsibilities cover items impacting every fund within the City, such as accounts payable or payroll. The addition of this new Accountant will also allow the Accountant positions, 1 new and 1 existing, to focus on some of the auditing procedures that the external auditors for the City have been recommending for the last several years.

The changes to the existing FTEs will build on the new FTEs described previously. Not only will it assist with better alignment of responsibilities within the department, but it will also allow the department to become more proactive. The first change would be to add an Assistant Finance Director to the department by changing the classification and job duties of the Senior Accountant. The department previously had an Assistant Finance Director, but the position was eliminated in 2002. This recommendation also comes from an analysis of other cities within our array used for comparison purposes. A majority of other cities have an assistant or deputy Finance Director. For the City of Grand Island this would address several ongoing issues, which are:

1. A clear position that can fill in for the Finance Director during any long term or short term absence.
2. Establish a clear chain of command within the department.
3. Place somebody in a position to exercise operational, or day to day, oversight of the Finance Department. This in turn would allow the Finance Director to focus on long term or “big picture” challenges, goals and ideas.

The other change is in the payroll group within the Finance Department. Currently the payroll group consists of a Payroll Specialist and an Accounting Clerk, who is dedicated primarily to payroll. The change would be to eliminate 1 Accounting Clerk FTE and create one Payroll Clerk FTE. This is to better clarify the duties of this individual and allow for easier comparability to other cities. As payroll positions are commonly defined separately from the generic “accounting clerk” positions.

The estimated high and low costs of this change are detailed on the next page. The overall impact of these changes will be a reduction in overtime, increased productivity and a solid foundation within the Finance Department as the City continues to grow. Additionally, these positions were not originally budgeted for in the 2015 fiscal year; however, due to current and prior vacancies this year, the existing budget for personnel will accommodate these new positions for the remainder of 2015. It will also have a minimal impact on the overall cost to the General Fund, because of the cost sharing that occurs between Finance and the Utility funds.

Cost Estimate (Wages and Benefits)

	2015		2016	
	Low	High	Low	High
Customer Service Team Leader	19,773.34	24,677.11	67,794.32	84,607.23
Accountant	22,252.06	29,095.59	76,292.76	99,756.31
TOTAL	42,025.40	53,772.70	144,087.08	184,363.54

General Fund Cost	9,245.59	11,829.99	31,699.16	40,559.98
Utility Fund Cost	32,779.81	41,942.71	112,387.92	143,803.56

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand. The Council may:

1. Move to approve
2. Refer the issue to a Committee
3. Postpone the issue to a future date
4. Take no action on the issue

Recommendation

City Administration recommends that the Council approve this amendment to the Finance Personnel FTE Budget Allocation.

Sample Motion

Move to approve the amendment to the Finance Personnel FTE Budget Allocation with the addition of the Customer Service Team Leader and Accountant. As well as changing titles from Senior Accountant to Assistant Finance Director and moving one Accounting Clerk to the newly created Payroll Clerk FTE.

CITY OF

Grand Island

NEBRASKA

Proposed Finance Department Changes

5-12-2015

History

- Current FTE count of 25.25
- In 1996 FTE count was 31
- Majority of cuts occurred in early to mid 2000's
 - Eliminated Assistant Finance Director
 - Added, then eliminated Finance Controller
 - Net elimination of 2 Accountants
 - Net elimination of 3 clerical positions

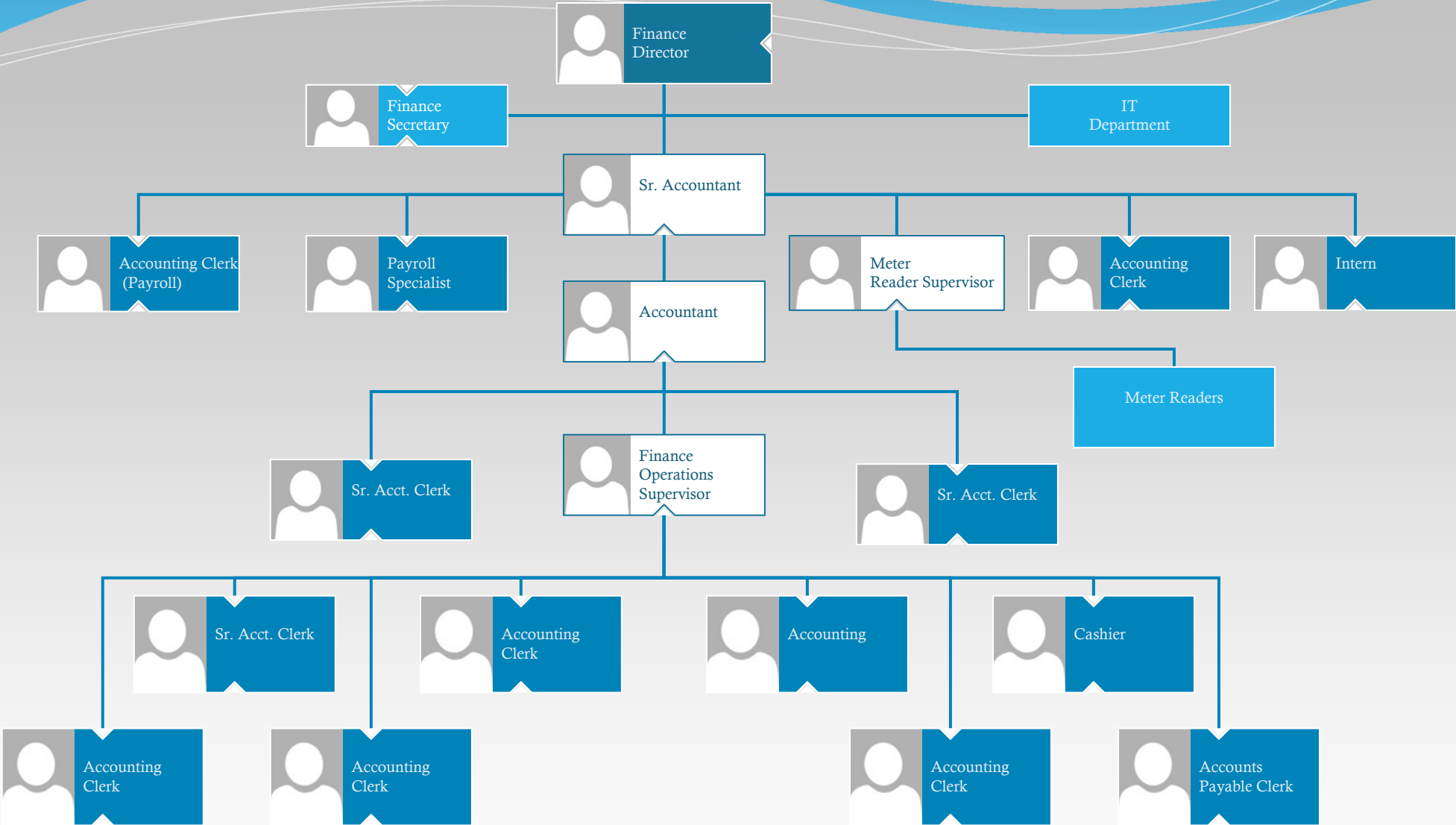
Impact Today

- Frequent overtime for staff
- Inflexible department
- Value adding services

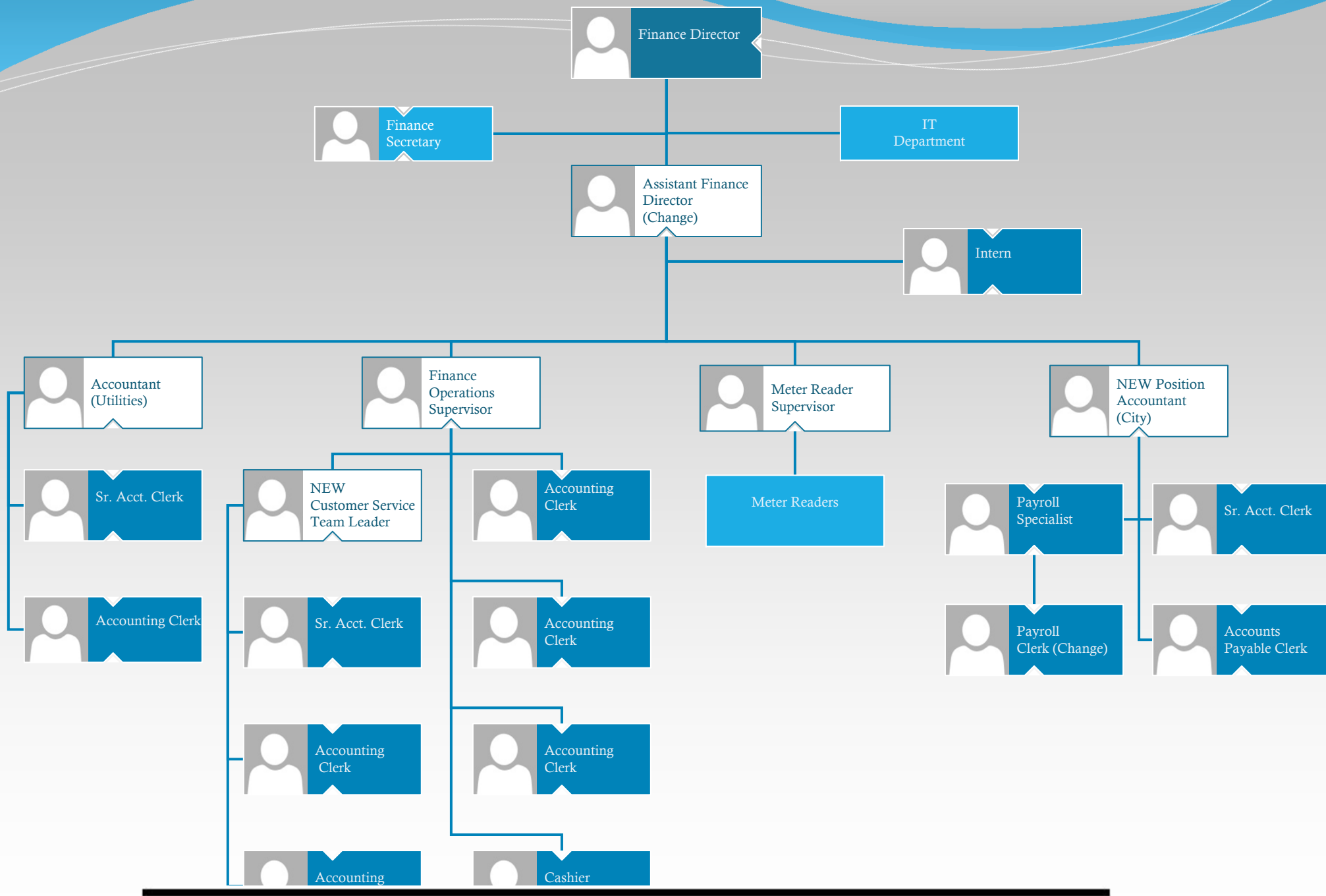
Proposed Changes

- Reintroduce the Assistant Finance Director position
- Add an Accountant
- Add a Customer Service Team Leader
- Properly classify Accounting Clerk as a Payroll Clerk

Current
 City of Grand Island – Finance Department



Proposed
City of Grand Island – Finance Department



History of Finance Department FTEs, excluding the IT Department

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>FTE's</u>	<u>FTE Changes</u>
FY Ending 1995	31.75	
FY Ending 1996	32	+ .25 Sr Accounting Clerk
FY Ending 1997	31	-1 Purchasing Agent
FY Ending 1998	31	
FY Ending 1999	31	
FY Ending 2000	31	
FY Ending 2001	31	
FY Ending 2002	31	-1 Assistant Finance Director + 1 Finance Controller
FY Ending 2003	31.58	+ .58 Accounting Clerk
FY Ending 2004	31.08	-2 Accountants, +.50 Meter Reader, +1 Sr Accountant
FY Ending 2005	30.08	-1 Finance Controller, +1 Accountant, -1 Sr Accounting Clerk
FY Ending 2006	29.08	-1 Accounting Clerk
FY Ending 2007	28.08	-1 Accountant
FY Ending 2008	27.5	-.58 Accounting Clerk
FY Ending 2009	27	-.50 Meter Reader
FY Ending 2010	27	-1 Purchasing Technician, +1 Accounts Payable Clerk
FY Ending 2011	25.5	-1 Cashier, -.50 Meter Reader
FY Ending 2012	25.25	-.50 Meter Reader +.25 Finance Temporary Worker/Intern
FY Ending 2013	25.25	
FY Ending 2014	25.25	
FY Ending 2015	25.25	



CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM LEADER

DEPARTMENT: Finance Department

CLASSIFICATION: Exempt

DIVISION: Customer Service

JOB CLASS:

DEFINITION

Directly manage the day to day activities of the customer service staff, responsible for all customer service activities, and act as the escalation point for concerned customers.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receive direction from the Finance Operations Supervisor.

Exercise direct supervision over customer service staff.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Manage and assign the daily workload for the customer service staff.

Review and provide recommendations to customer service staff based on observations and customer feedback.

Review daily batches created by the customer service staff.

Address customer concerns and work towards resolving any problems.

Acknowledge and address recurring customer concerns.

Assist with daily customer service duties, when needed.

Assist with the collections process for delinquent customers.

Responsible for responding to customer inquiries submitted in writing (physical or electronic).

Troubleshoot and work towards resolving system issues.

Provide support to the Finance Operations Supervisor.

Display honest, trustworthy and ethical behavior when dealing with internal and external customers. Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Display a willingness to assume and visibly demonstrate mentoring and coaching, role modeling and leadership to staff members by recognizing and developing talent.

Regular attendance that is punctual and dependable is required.

Perform related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

Customer service.

Cash handling.

Pertinent Federal, State, and local laws, codes and regulations.

Modern office methods, practices, procedures, computer equipment and financial software packages.

Principles of supervision, leadership, training and performance evaluation.

Research and reporting methods, techniques and procedures.

Proper public contact.

Ability to:

Supervise, train and evaluate assigned staff.

Research customer inquiries.

Resolve customer inquiries.

Maintain professional composure when confronted by customers.

Work independently in the absence of supervision.

Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.

License or Certification:

None required.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING GUIDELINES

Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Experience:

Five years of increasingly responsible customer service roles, preferably in a supervisory capacity.

Training:

Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth grade, additional specialized training in customer service is desirable.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Activities:

Sitting	Frequent
Standing	Occasional
Walking	Occasional
Reaching	Occasional
Climbing Stairs	Occasional
Bending	Occasional
Squatting	Occasional
Kneeling	Occasional
Twist/Turn	Occasional
Simple Grasping	Occasional
Fine Manipulation	Frequent
Handling	Occasional

Lifting

Waist Level	20#
Chair to Floor	20#

Push/Pull

20#

Carry

Right	20# Occasional
Left	20# Occasional

Use of Feet

Left	Occasional
Right	Occasional

Foot Controls

Occasional
Occasional

RESOLUTION 2015-131

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Island and the Finance Department is wanting to correctly staff the department; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Department will add two non-union FTEs of Accountant and Customer Service Team Leader; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Department will change two existing classifications of Senior Accountant to Assistant Finance Director and one Accounting Clerk to the new classification of Payroll Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the estimated 2015 cost of this change is between \$42,000 and \$54,000; and

WHEREAS, the cost was not originally budgeted, but expenditure authority exists for these new positions due to previous and current vacancies within the department; and

WHEREAS, an amendment to the Finance Personnel FTE Budget Allocation is necessary to allow for the addition of the Accountant and the Customer Service Team Leader FTEs and the change of classification title from Senior Accountant to Assistant Finance Director as well as moving one Accounting Clerk into the new classification of Payroll clerk.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, that amending the Finance Personnel FTE Budget Allocation is hereby approved.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, May 12, 2015.

Jeremy L. Jensen, Mayor

Attest:

RaNae Edwards, City Clerk

Approved as to Form	☐ _____
May 8, 2015	☐ City Attorney