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Inter-Departmental Communication
Office of the City Auditor

Date: July 1, 2014

To: Councilman Jermaine Reed

From: Douglas Jones, City Auditor

Subject: Response to Request to Audit Airport Police Officer Compensation

I received your June 17, 2014, request to audit the adequacy of compensation for the Airport Police Officer job classification. I appreciate your interest in asking the City Auditor's Office to help you obtain information about city programs or activities, but the City Auditor's Office is unable to initiate audits at the request of individual councilmembers. The City Council as a body or the City Council's Finance, Governance and Ethics Committee, as the standing committee responsible for overseeing the work of the city auditor, may direct the city auditor to conduct a specific audit.

In an effort to provide you with some information that may address your concern, we talked with staff in the Human Resources Department and reviewed materials related to compensation for the Airport Police Officer job classification. We did not analyze or draw any conclusions from the information reviewed and this memo does not constitute an audit under Government Auditing Standards.

Summary

Since the completion of the Human Resources Department's January 2013 market study, the starting pay for the Airport Police Officer job classification has been increased. Ordinance 140240 increased the starting pay by 10 percent in April 2014. New hires without Peace Officer Standards & Training (P.O.S.T.) certification have a lower starting salary while in training, but will receive about a $5,000 increase after six months of employment and successful completion of P.O.S.T. certification training. New hires with P.O.S.T. certification have a higher minimum starting salary. The minimum starting salary for Airport Police Officers that are P.O.S.T. certified is currently about 9.6 percent below the market average calculated by the Human Resources Department. Human Resources considers city pay ranges that are at least 90 percent of the market average acceptable.

What We Found

The Airport Police Officer job classification has three internal pay zones within the overall pay range for this job classification and requirements for promotion from one zone to the next. Individuals who are not P.O.S.T. certified when hired are sent to training. During P.O.S.T. certification training, new Airport Police Officer recruits are paid the Zone 1 salary and the Aviation Department pays for their training, which costs about $6,000. After six months of employment and receiving P.O.S.T.

certification, Airport Police Officers are promoted to the Zone 2 pay range resulting in about a $5,000 increase to their base salary. Individuals who are P.O.S.T. certified can be hired into the Zone 2 pay range. After four years of employment as an Airport Police Officer and obtaining one of six additional certifications such as K-9 Handler or Field Training Officer, Airport Police Officers may be promoted to the Zone 3 pay range.

The Human Resources Department conducted a market study in January 2013 and identified seven other cities with positions equivalent to the Airport Police Officer job classification. The average market salary range was $36,516 to $55,778 compared to the salary range for Kansas City's Airport Police Officer job classification of $25,488 to $60,720. Ordinance 140240 increased the starting pay for the Airport Police Officer job classification in April 2014. The current pay range for this job classification is now $28,032 to $60,720. Based on Human Resources' January 2013 market study, this increase places the Zone 1 salary about 23.2 percent below the market average and the Zone 2 minimum starting salary of $33,012 is about 9.6 percent below the market average calculated by Human Resources. The Human Resources Department considers city pay ranges that are at least 90 percent of the market average, which Zone 2 is now at, acceptable.

cc: Mayor Sylvester "Sly" James Jr.
        Members of the City Council
        Troy M. Schulte, City Manager