

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: DOMINIQUE BLANQUIE, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: STATUS OF VACANT POSITIONS IN COMPLIANCE WITH
ASSEMBLY BILL 2561 (2024)

AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Human Resources Department that Council, by motion, receive this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present an update on position vacancies in compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 2561 - Local public employees, vacant positions.

BACKGROUND

California State Assembly Bill (AB) 2561 was adopted by the Legislature on September 22, 2024, and added §3502.3 to the Government Code. This law, effective January 1, 2025, requires public agencies at least once each fiscal year to: (1) hold a public hearing and receive the agency's report on the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts; (2) during the hearing, identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may lead to hiring obstacles; and, (3) allow the recognized employee organization for bargaining units to make a presentation at the hearing.

In addition, if the number of job vacancies within a single bargaining unit meets or exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions, the City must, upon request of the recognized employee organization, include additional specified information during the public hearing.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

Vacancies

As of the date of our analysis on March 26, 2025, 106.20 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions were vacant out of 1,289.15 total FTE budgeted positions for an overall vacancy rate of 8.24%. A report of vacancy rates by bargaining unit as of March 26, 2025 is attached as Attachment 1.

During the midyear budget adjustment on January 28, 2025, Council approved the elimination of \$2.6 million in funding for 19 FTE positions. These eliminated positions were excluded from the vacancy analysis.

The attached vacancy information was provided to the City's bargaining unit representatives with the request to inform the Human Resources Department if they intend to present to Council on this topic during the hearing.

The vacancy report shows that no bargaining unit vacancy rate meets or exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized FTE positions. Therefore, the additional information required by AB2561 in this instance will not be required.

Recruitment and Retention Efforts

As part of a strategy to make the General Fund fiscally sustainable, starting July 1, 2024, the City initiated a hiring freeze for vacant positions that were not already in the recruitment process. A new process was put in place to review requests to fill positions based on operational necessity prior to releasing the positions from the freeze.

As of July 1, 2024, there were 147.80 FTE positions vacant. Between July 1, 2024 and March 26, 2025, 69 employees separated, 92 new employees were hired, and 36 employees were promoted. The turnover rate during this time was 5.85%.

Between July 1, 2024 and March 26, 2025, the Human Resources Department initiated 44 new recruitments, received 2,636 applications and referred 764 candidates to hiring departments. To expedite recruitment and hiring, consulting firm CPS-HR was contracted to assist with recruitments, given the Human Resources Department staffing challenges and the priority of the Citywide Classification and Compensation study.

Of the 106.20 FTE positions vacant on March 26, 2025, 49 FTE positions had been approved to fill and were in some stage of recruitment, including 5 FTE positions filled, pending start dates. The rest were held for review.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Council finds that pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the proposed action is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

This item is on the agenda for the June 3, 2025 City Council meeting and will follow all required postings and notifications. On May 8, 2025, all bargaining units were notified of the City’s intent to comply with Assembly Bill 2561. Further, they were notified they were entitled to make a presentation at this hearing pursuant to Government Code Section 3502.3. No other public outreach was conducted for this hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Status of Vacant Positions in Compliance with Assembly Bill 2561 (204)

PRESENTER

Dominique Blanquie, Human Resources Director