



# City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,  
Oceanside, California 92054

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 26-1443

**Agenda Date:** 6/3/2026

**Agenda #:** 14.

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**DATE:** June 3, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

**FROM:** Water Utilities Department

**TITLE: RECLASSIFY AN EXISTING LABORATORY ASSISTANT POSITION TO LABORATORY TECHNICIAN, AND APPROPRIATE FUNDS**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommend that the City Council approve the reclassification of an existing authorized full-time benefited Laboratory Assistant position to a full-time benefited Laboratory Technician position in the Water Utilities Department, effective August 2, 2026, or upon the vacancy of the incumbent and approval of this item, and appropriate \$14,025 from the Water and Sewer fund balance.

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

The Water Utilities Department has one Laboratory Assistant and two Laboratory Technician positions. The Laboratory Assistant position will be vacated in late July due to an anticipated retirement. This notification of retirement has allowed staff the opportunity to review the duties of the position and future needs of the Department.

The Water Utilities Department's Laboratory team is the primary group responsible for analyses that provide process control data for the City's water and wastewater plants, as well as reportable data to comply with several regulatory permits. The duties for these positions have increased over the years due to the onboarding of the Pure Water plant, increasing regulatory requirements, and the adoption of new standards for laboratory certification. The Laboratory Assistant performs essential but less advanced tasks such as media preparation and the cleaning and sterilization of laboratory equipment.

Reclassifying the Laboratory Assistant to a Laboratory Technician will create a more robust team for the more complex duties necessary to keep the city in regulatory compliance and to better monitor the water from the treatment plants. Additionally, due to updated laboratory certification requirements, the quality assurance procedures have increased in frequency and complexity, outpacing the requirements of the current Laboratory Assistant position. These increased responsibilities are more reflective of the Laboratory Technician position than the Laboratory Assistant position. An additional Laboratory Technician would also provide more flexibility for coverage, increase efficiency, and staffing stability.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Staff anticipate filling the Laboratory Technician (UT01WA01) position as soon as feasible pending the vacancy of the Laboratory Assistant position and following City Council authorization. For FY 2026-27, the difference in costs between the proposed Laboratory Technician position and the existing Laboratory Assistant position is \$14,025. Staff request that council appropriate these funds from the Water (balance \$8.3 million) and Sewer (balance \$3.8 million) Operating fund unrestricted reserves; these accounts have sufficient balance to fund this request. Funds will be appropriated to the Sewer Laboratory (800806721.5105 70%) and Water Laboratory (750760711.5105 30%) personnel services accounts. Table 1 below outlines the funding. In subsequent years, this cost will be fully funded in the annual water utilities operating budget request.

Table 1

Description	Water 750760711.5105 (30%)	Sewer 800806721.5105 (70%)	Total
Laboratory Technician (Step C)	\$ 36,405	\$ 84,944	\$ 121,349
Laboratory Assistant (Step G)	32,197	75,127	107,324
Difference (to appropriate)	\$ 4,208	\$ 9,817	\$ 14,025
Funding Source	711.3100.0002	721.3100.0002	

**COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT**

Does not apply.

**CITY ATTORNEY’S ANALYSIS**

Does not apply.

Prepared by: John McKelvey, Principal Management Analyst

Reviewed by: Frederick Mayo, Water Utilities Director

Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager