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City of Albuquerque

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Investigative Informative Case Synopsis

FILE NO: 22-0212-C

SUBJECT MATTER: Alleged waste of resources due to unnecessary hiring at BioPark related to two positions.

STATUS: Final

INVESTIGATOR: M. Santistevan

DocuSigned by:

Melissa R. Santistevan

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May 2, 2023

Date of Completion

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Edmund E. Perea

EDMUND E. PEREA, ESQ
ACCOUNTABILITY IN GOVERNMENT
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

June 28, 2023

Date of Approval

DISTRIBUTION:

- Honorable Mayor**
- President City Council**
- Chief Administrative Officer**
- City Councilors**
- Director Council Services**
- City Attorney**
- Department Director**
- Members, Accountability and Government Oversight Committee**
- File**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to City Ordinance 2-17-2, the Inspector General's goals are to (1) Conduct investigations in an efficient, impartial, equitable, and objective manner; (2) Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in city activities including all city contracts and partnerships; (3) Deter criminal activity through independence in fact and appearance, investigation and interdiction; and (4) Propose ways to increase the city's legal, fiscal and ethical accountability to insure that tax payers' dollars are spent in a manner consistent with the highest standards of local governments.

On December 21, 2022, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) received a referral complaint from the Office of Internal Audit alleging a waste of resources due to unnecessary hiring at the BioPark related to two positions. The OIG determined that the allegations contained elements of waste and possibly abuse and that it was appropriate for the OIG to conduct a fact-finding investigation. The purpose of the investigation was to obtain and review the evidence and to determine if the allegation of waste of resources due to unnecessary hiring at the BioPark is substantiated or not substantiated.

As a result of the investigation, the OIG was able to obtain evidence to suggest that certain positions at the BioPark may not be fully utilized but because the desk audits were completed by employees, the information provided was subjective and thus not considered reliable for substantiating or not substantiating the allegation. The OIG is recommending an audit of the positions.

ABBREVIATIONS

City: City of Albuquerque
FTE: Full time employee
HRD: Central Human Resources
OIG: Office of Inspector General

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) is to provide independent and objective insight, oversight, and foresight in promoting integrity, efficiency, overall effectiveness, accountability, and transparency in government to safeguard and preserve public trust.

Complaint

A waste of resources due to unnecessary hiring at the BioPark related to two positions.

Background

The ABQ BioPark consists of the ABQ BioPark Zoo, Botanic Garden, Aquarium, and Tingly Beach, located along the Rio Grande River near downtown Albuquerque. The BioPark employs head cashiers to accommodate guests and events staff to promote large events and weddings among its many employees. The BioPark is currently booking private large group events (500 guests and up) at the Zoo and Botanic Gardens. The BioPark is not accepting wedding applications for 2023 and 2024 but is developing a new plan for weddings in the future. The BioPark Cashiers collect admissions to the BioPark Zoo, Botanic Garden, and Aquarium.

INVESTIGATION

Allegation: A waste of resources due to unnecessary hiring at the Bio Park related to two positions.

Authority: Article 17 provides authority to the Office of Inspector General to investigate allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse.

Evidence: Desk audits requested from Central Human Resources
Supporting documents, metrics, and justification of the need for positions

Analysis: The OIG reviewed the desk audits submitted by Central Human Resources (HRD), noting that each employee completed their own desk audit and that there was no evaluation of the positions by HRD. Evaluations of positions with the same title appeared to be subjective based on whom it was completed by. Each employee sharing the same title, indicated that they were a regular employee working forty (40) hours per week. Each employee had a different supervisor

despite being employed by the Bio Park. Three (3) of the five (5) employees' desk audits revealed changes in the scope of the essential functions of the position.

The OIG noted that all essential functions are not required regularly. Some of the essential functions are done weekly or quarterly resulting in underutilized days according to the desk audits completed by the employees.

The OIG requested supporting documentation, data, metrics, and justification for the positions of Head Cashier and Events Supervisors hired at the Bio Park and was provided the following:

“The two Head Cashiers and Operations & Events Supervisor were hired when the BioPark was developing the shuttle program, which was a new addition to the guest experience team duties.

With the addition of two Head Cashiers, the BioPark now has 7-day coverage at both facilities (Zoo and Aquarium & Garden). In addition to clerical and cashiering support for the shuttle, the Head Cashiers also increase capacity to support guest experiences through field trip reservations, 311 inquiries, ticket transfers, membership questions and other daily duties.

Shifts available per week = 14 (7-day coverage at two facilities)

Previously: 1 head cashier = 5 shifts of coverage at a single site

Currently: 3 total head cashiers = 15 shifts covered at both sites, the 1 extra shift is devoted to frontline service in a cashier booth to cover temp staff call-outs or vacancies

The Operations & Events Supervisor (E16) provides oversight for three large components of BioPark guest experience: admissions, events and the new shuttle services. This position was needed to provide a strong organizational structure for guest operations across the BioPark in addition to providing back-up daily shift supervision and after-hours event support.

An additional Events Supervisor (M14) was hired in FY23 through the reclassification of an existing position. This hire provided additional leadership for the shuttle services in addition to admissions shift supervision (2 days per week) and event planning and execution (3 days per week).

In addition to City FTEs, the guest experience team includes 12 temporary staff to serve as cashiers, event assistants and shuttle drivers 7 days a week at the Zoo, Aquarium and Botanic Garden.

Being New Mexico’s number one most visited attraction, it is essential for the ABQ BioPark to appropriately staff and manage each facility to serve the 1.3 million annual guests.”

The OIG’s review of the email response was not supported by actual metrics or other supporting documentation and thus could not be relied upon as evidence to support the positions

The BioPark provided the OIG with the FY22 issue paper request submitted for consideration by City Administration indicating the need and justification for the additional positions requested as follows:

“In FY22, \$800k in GRT funds were prioritized to bring our community a reliable transportation option that would allow guests, with one combination ticket, to travel between and visit both the BioPark Zoo and BioPark Aquarium and Botanic Garden in a single day. With a new tram coming online Spring 2022, it is anticipated that 80,000 guests will utilize this new faster and more reliable tram service between the BioPark properties. Average annual Combo Ticket purchases in FY1-FY19 was 80,699.

The addition of three staff members to the Guest Services team will allow for 7 day/week customer service coverage at the BioPark Zoo and BioPark Botanic Garden/Aquarium. In addition to providing excellent customer service these guest service representatives will ensure safety as guest get on and get off the train. These same staff will be on hand to 'upsell' to visitors who may decide, in the middle of a visit, that they would like to visit the other BioPark facilities.”

Head Cashier	C29	15.75	FT	2	107,712
Driver	B20	16.01	FT	1	55,100
Ops & Events Supervisor	E16		FT	1	82,662

The OIG’s review of the issue paper for budgetary approval provides a justification but does not include any metrics to support the proposed increase in positions. The OIG considered that this request was for FY22 and given that we are in FY23 the department should have been able to provide some metrics to reflect that these positions were necessary. Some metrics might have been increased attendance, an increase in events, seasonal events, staffing vacations, etc.

Conclusion: The OIG has determined that the evidence provided is insufficient. The information provided is subjective and thus not considered reliable for substantiating or not substantiating the allegation.

General Observations and Recommendations:

Observation: The OIG noted that each of the desk audits completed by five employees revealed that each estimate their workload to be between 55% and 80%.

Recommendation: Human Resources or the Office of Internal Audit should conduct audits of these positions to determine if they can be consolidated into fewer FTE positions. The audits should be conducted by individuals not employed by the BioPark and should be objective and based on the regular duties for these positions.

Management's response:

Response to the investigation process

The Department of Arts & Culture/BioPark found this OIG investigation process to be confusing and unclear for several reasons. Since the quality of an investigation is directly related to the quality of the findings, observations, and recommendations, it is important to summarize the department's concerns with the investigation process as part of our managerial response.

1. **Lack of communication to the Department Director:** In Spring 2022, the Director of Arts & Culture initiated two conversations with the IG (one via email and one telephone discussion) about notifying the Department Director of any complaints (unless there are extenuating circumstances) in order to ensure that the right people with relevant information are brought into the conversation early. Depending on the complaint, there may be good reasons to include or exclude certain staff from the conversation as information is gathered and this may or may not be obvious to people outside of the department. In addition, the Department Director also wants to see a thorough and successful investigation especially if there is fraud, waste, or abuse occurring in their department. In response to the email and phone discussion, the IG did confirm in April 2022 that she would notify the department director, however, that did not happen with this investigation, and has not happened with other investigations as well.

OIG Response: In April 2022, Director Sanchez contacted the OIG to complain that she was not notified of a complaint our office staff was working on. The IG reviewed the correspondence from this office and determined that the subject was the BioPark and that an email was sent to the BioPark Administrator on April 18, 2022, at 11:08 am, notifying her of the complaint. On April 19, 2022, at 9:04 am, the BioPark Administrator replied to the OIG stating that she was carbon copying Director Sanchez. At 9:06 am, on April 19, 2022, the investigator forwarded the message to both the IG and Director Sanchez. The IG responded to Director Sanchez's complaint by submitting the email string to indicate that although she was not the first to be notified, she was notified by both her staff and the OIG staff within 24 hours of initiation. The IG advised Director Sanchez that she would reiterate, to the OIG staff, the need to notify the Department Director.

On June 7, 2022, at 4:50 pm, the OIG notified Director Sanchez of a complaint and requested the name, of the liaison who would be addressing the complaint. On June 7, 2022, at 5:03 pm, Director Sanchez replied to the OIG with the name of the liaison to contact.

On August 31, 2022, the OIG received a complaint related to the BioPark. At 12:23 pm on August 31, 2022, the OIG referred this complaint to the BioPark Administrator and Bio Park Deputy

Director. On August 31, 2022, at 1:25 pm, the Deputy Director responded via email indicating appreciation for passing this complaint through to them and indicating that they would address the issue if warranted. On August 31, 2022, at 3:51 pm, Director Sanchez emailed the entire email string to the IG stating that although the BioPark Administrator (Division Manager) and the Deputy Director were informed, the Director was not included in the email string. On August 31, 2022, at 3:52 pm, the IG responded to the Director that she would reiterate that the OIG staff must reach out to the Director.

On December 2, 2022 at 1:57 pm, an email was sent to Director Sanchez advising her that the OIG is looking into the procurement of resources related to the book titled, "City at the Crossroads" and was requesting additional documentation. On December 2, 2022 at 5:57 pm, Director Sanchez replied stating that this information had been the subject for earlier IPRA requests and Denise would forward the information collected in November. Additionally, Director Sanchez indicated that she would be on personal leave and that the Deputy Director should be contacted for further information.

On April 19, 2023, Director Sanchez sent an email to the OIG asking whether she would get to see the full investigation report prior to its publication and whether she would get to provide a written response to the report prior to it going to the AGO committee. Director Sanchez also provided "follow-ups" to interview questions responses she had provided in an earlier interview.

On April 20, 2023 at 4:00 pm, the OIG responded to Director Sanchez's questions as follows:

1. Does the Department have the opportunity to review the report before it is public and/or before it goes to the committee?
No, you will receive a copy when the AGO approves and signs the report.

2. Does the Department have the opportunity to write a response before it is public and/or before it goes to the committee?
Yes, our office will send you a copy of our Observations and Recommendation and ask for Manager's response which will be added to the report.

April 24, 2023, at 2:50 pm, the OIG sent an email to the BioPark Guest Services Manager and to Director Sanchez stating "The OIG is requesting supporting documentation and metrics for the position of Head Cashier and Events Supervisors hired for the Bio Park/Zoo over the last year. Can you please forward any current data you have to support each job title and the number of positions for each job title and the daily workload? If there is a justification form for the positions, please provide those as well. "On April 24, 2023, at 9:06 am, the BioPark Guest Services Manager responded to the OIG and carbon copying Director Sanchez, the BioPark Administrator, and the Deputy Director, asking for clarification of the items requested. On April 26, 2023, at 10:10 am the IG replied to all with "The OIG is looking for the underlying data that indicated the need to hire more Head Cashiers and Events Supervisors. If supporting documentation and metrics from a previous period were utilized to justify the positions, the OIG is asking that those metrics be updated with current figures/data. The OIG is requesting to know what the positions do on a daily basis. Job description duties may not be performed daily so an actual account would be helpful." On May 2, 2023, at 12:43 pm, the Bio Park Guest Services Manager replied to the OIG and carbon copied Director Sanchez, the BioPark Administrator, and the Deputy Director with a copy of the issue paper and the following information:

Hello, Ms. Santistevan.

Here is the information you requested. Please see the attachment and the information below.

Thank you,
Allyson

The two Head Cashiers and Operations & Events Supervisor were hired when the BioPark was developing the shuttle program, which was a new addition to the guest experience team duties.

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Being New Mexico's number one most visited attraction, it is essential for the ABQ BioPark to appropriately staff and manage each facility to serve the 1.3 million annual guests.

On May 4, 2023, at 3:14 pm, the OIG emailed the Observation and Recommendation for 22-0212-C to the BioPark Guest Services Manager and to Director Sanchez for Response.

On May 5, 2023, at 11:39 am, Director Sanchez emailed the OIG with the following questions:

Ms. Santistevan,

The OIG noted that desk audits were completed by five BioPark employees. Can you please clarify which positions were audited as part of this investigation so that

we can provide a complete managerial response? Can you share copies of the desk audits?

On May 5, 2023, the OIG spoke to the City Attorney related to the request by Director Sanchez due to concerns that the information sought could be used to retaliate against those who completed the desk audits. Additionally, the OIG was concerned because Director Sanchez had been party to the emails that indicated the information requested that included the positions being looked into.

On May 5, 2023, at 12:04 pm, the OIG responded to Director Sanchez as follows:

Good morning Dr. Sanchez,
Until approved by the AGO, this is considered an active investigation, therefore, we are precluded from releasing information. Additionally, the allegation indicated the positions addressed.

On May 18, 2023, at 10:25 pm, Director Sanchez sent an email with the managerial response attached, requesting the entire attachment be included as the managerial response.

The email correspondence reflects that Director Sanchez was notified of OIG matters pertaining to her departments although she may not have been the first to be notified by the OIG, she was notified within 24 hours of initiation. The outcome of an investigation by the OIG should not be affected by whether or not Director Sanchez is the first to be notified by the OIG.

2. **Vague questions and lack of clarification:** The Department of Arts & Culture/BioPark staff asked for clarification on the vague questions posed by email regarding this investigation in order to gather and provide relevant information. However, staff did not receive helpful clarification from OIG, and therefore it was difficult for staff to know what information to collect and provide. BioPark staff did provide information, and then assumed there would be further clarification, follow-up, or discussion with OIG. However, that did not happen.

OIG Response: As indicated in the email correspondence from April 2, 2023 through May 2, 2023, the OIG was responsive and even provided clarification regarding the initial request for information. These emails also included Director Sanchez who elected not to respond until after the General Observations were sent to her and the BioPark Guest Services Manager on May 4, 2023. In the managerial response from Director Sanchez, dated May 18, 2023, there appears to be no confusion about the requested documentation as she willingly provided a written response although without supporting documentation, related to the staffing needs in a slow season, a busy season, during call outs and vacations, and during seasonal events. The managerial response provided by Director Sanchez also provided the justification for the current staffing positions and the job duties of the positions referred to in the emails. The inclusion of this information in the managerial response is an indication that Director Sanchez understood the email request and clarification provided even if the staff did not and yet she chose not to respond or provide the information or guide her staff on what to provide.

3. **No interviews or direct conversations:** Although the department does not know all the information that was collected by the OIG during their investigation, it seems that a series of desk audits and one request for information from the Guest Experience Manager at the BioPark is primarily the basis for the conclusions and recommendations. Unfortunately, the OIG did

not interview department leadership or the BioPark Administrator about the minimal staff expansion for the Guest Services team nor did the OIG interview supervisors or staff about their daily duties and schedules. Therefore, the OIG had very little context about broader operational and staffing issues as they drew their conclusions and made their recommendations. It also appears that the OIG did not collect nor consider information on the required and multi-step/cross-departmental process required to create new positions or reclassify existing positions which would have clarified that the creation of new positions goes through a multi-step process of review and approval that includes: division managers, department leadership (fiscal and administrative), Department of Finance and Administration, Human resources Department, and the CAO. In addition, staffing levels and new positions are reviewed as part of the budgeting process each year by City Council so there is additional oversight and accountability there as well.

OIG Response: Director Sanchez is correct that there were no interviews conducted. The review of the requested documentation proved insufficient to warrant spending additional time on this investigation until an audit is conducted by Human Resources or Internal Audit to obtain sufficient evidence necessary for substantiating or not substantiating the allegation of waste.

4. The use of Desk Audits: It seems that the OIG chose to use desk audits as a proxy for time audits as they investigated research/understand operational and staffing needs of the BioPark. Desk Audits are specifically designed to evaluate whether or not an employee is properly classified and/or is working outside of their job description. These forms do not provide complete information about the operational or staffing needs of a team or division and, yet, that was the focus of this investigation. In addition, most or all of the employees who were asked by the OIG to complete a desk audit have never seen or completed this form and therefore were completely unfamiliar with the questions, the intent, or likely the meaning of the many of the questions.

ADDRESSING DESK AUDITS

Head cashiers and event supervisors that submitted desk audits self-identified their work at the following percentages:

- [REDACTED] – 65% essential functions, 35% change in scope (multiple pages)
- [REDACTED] – 44% + 24% essential functions (2 pages), 32% change in scope
- [REDACTED] – no percentage of time calculated
- [REDACTED] – 56% essential functions, 44% change in scope
- [REDACTED] – not available as of this writing

Upon review of the duties listed under change in scope, their work was categorized by the BioPark’s Guest Services Manager into the following percentages:

- [REDACTED] – 100% essential functions
- [REDACTED] – 100% essential functions
- [REDACTED] – 100% essential functions
- [REDACTED] – 100% essential functions
- [REDACTED] – not available as of this writing

OIG Response: The Director was not provided with the complaint details and therefore any assertion regarding the focus of our investigation is an assumption and not based on fact. The OIG did not ask any employees to complete the desk audit but rather the OIG asked the Central Human Resources Department to conduct desk audits of the positions based on information obtained as part of the complaint. While the forms were completed by City personnel, they did not appear to have been evaluated by Human Resources. Therefore, the OIG determined that the information was not reliable to substantiate or not substantiate the allegation and made a recommendation to have an audit conducted to obtain reliable evidence.

Response to the observations and recommendations

The Arts & Culture Department completely disagrees with the OIGs observations and recommendations for several reasons beyond the concerns numerated above.

1. The OIG states in their conclusion that they did NOT collect sufficient information “to substantiate or not substantiate” the complaint, and yet the OIG does draw conclusions and does make recommendations that include potentially reducing the number of guest services staff at the BioPark.

This recommendation from the OIG does not align with or fully consider the operational requirements for: two separate ticketed entry points (BioPark Zoo and BioPark Aquarium/Botanic Gardens); the operation of a daily shuttle among BioPark locations; 7 days/week operations; staffing special evening events throughout the year; and serving more than 2.1 million visitors annually (typically the most visited attraction in the State of New Mexico). In addition, the BioPark has three major attractions under construction: Asia which is the largest physical expansion of the Zoo in decades and will open in Fall 2023; Australia which will open in 2 phases over the next year; and Heritage Farm which will open in 2024. The department expects attendance bumps and then sustained attendance growth as all of these new investments come online which is why both animal care staff and guest experience staff numbers have grown intentionally over the past 4 years at the BioPark.

2. The OIG requested: “*supporting documentation and metrics for the position of Head Cashier and Events Supervisors hired for the Bio Park/Zoo over the last year. Can you please forward any current data you have to support each job title and the number of positions for each job title and the daily workload? If there is a justification form for the positions, please provide those as well.*”

This information was provided to the OIG based on the staff’s understanding of the request, however, based on the conclusions and recommendations, it seems that the OIG was actually interested in documentation/justification for staffing levels for the entire BioPark Guest Services team (not only the two positions added over the last year). The information below should provide a clear and detailed summary of why the current staffing levels are needed and essential (definitely not excessive), and how current full-time, permanent staffing levels must be augmented by many temporary cashier positions in order to meet the operational needs, especially during the summer season and River of Lights (Thanksgiving through December 30.)

STAFFING NEEDS – SLOW SEASON

The ABQ BioPark is open 7 days per week. To provide the basic admissions services on the lowest attended days, the BioPark requires a minimum of 8 staff people every day, at least one of which must be a supervisor. At least one person at each site must be able to access the safe (head cashiers, administrative supervisors, event supervisors).

- 1 Aquarium ticket booth
- Botanic Garden ticket booth
- 1 Zoo ticket booth
- Zoo reception desk
- Aquarium/Garden supervisor/breaker/cash room
- Zoo supervisor/breaker/cash room
- Shuttle driver (Tues-Sun)
- Shuttle safety driver/rider (Tues-Sun)

For 7-days of minimum coverage, these positions require 54 shifts to be filled. Shifts are filled in the following ways:

- Head cashiers – 15 shifts
- Administrative supervisors – 10 shifts
- Event supervisors – 4 shifts (6 remaining shifts are for event planning or call-out coverage)
- Shuttle driver – 6 shifts
- Shuttle safety driver/rider – 6 shifts
- Temporary staff – 13 shifts

STAFFING NEEDS – BUSY SEASONS

During periods of high spring and summer attendance and events, appropriate coverage requires 12-21 shifts per day and 109 shifts per week. Temporary staff fill the additional required shifts to allow more ticket booths for sales, coordination for field trip arrivals and after-hours event support. Overtime is often required for after-hours event coverage*.

- 2 Aquarium ticket booths (14/week)
- Botanic Garden ticket booth (7/week)
- 1 Aquarium expedited entry ticket scanner (7/week)
- Aquarium/Garden reception desk (7/week)
- 4 Zoo ticket booths (28/week)
- 1 Zoo school booth (Mon-Fri) (5/week)
- Zoo reception desk (7/week)
- Aquarium/Garden supervisor/breaker/cash room (7/week)
- Zoo supervisor/breaker/cash room (7/week)
- Shuttle driver (Tues-Sun) (6/week)
- Shuttle safety driver/rider (Tues-Sun) (6/week)
- 1 event manager on duty (2 events/week)
- 1 event admissions supervisor (1 event/week)
- 1-4 event assistants/cashiers (2 events/week, 5 shifts/week)

Spring and summer shifts are filled the following ways:

- Head cashiers – 15 regular shifts, plus 2 overtime shifts
- Administrative supervisors – 10 regular shifts, plus 1 overtime shift

- Event supervisors – 4 admissions shifts, plus 2 after-hours shifts (4 shifts = planning/call-outs)
- Shuttle driver – 6 shifts (City driver)
- Shuttle safety driver/rider – 6 shifts (4 by City driver, 2 by temp staff)
- Temporary staff – 63 shifts

*Note that with two event supervisor vacancies in May 2023, the BioPark’s Guest Services Manager and Operations & Events Supervisor are scheduled to work over 40 hours for a combined total of 55.5 extra hours for the month to ensure full coverage.

Impact of Callouts and Vacations

In all seasons, staff absences reduce the level of service we can provide to BioPark guests. If a supervisor is absent, a head cashier will provide functional or technical lead over other staff at that site by counting cash in/out for cashiers, reporting staff attendance to supervisor on duty at other site, and communicating site issues to supervisor on duty. While this solution keeps basic operations underway, it increases the response time for escalated customer service issues.

If a head cashier or temporary staff person is absent, their duties are redistributed among the supervisor and other temporary staff. During periods of low staff or multiple staff absences, this may mean that guest services are severely reduced during breaks and lunchtimes. Head cashier absences delay responses to email, field trip and 311 inquiries because temporary staff do not have access to these digital resources.

Staff absences typically occur 3 or more times per week.

During River of Lights from Thanksgiving weekend to December 30, appropriate coverage requires 11-17 shifts per day and 108 per week**

- 1 Aquarium daytime ticket booth (7/week)
- Botanic Garden daytime ticket booth (7/week)
- 1 Zoo ticket booths (7/week)
- Zoo reception desk (7/week)
- Aquarium/Garden supervisor/breaker/cash room (7/week)
- Zoo supervisor/breaker/cash room (7/week)
- Shuttle daytime driver (Tues-Sun) (6/week)
- Shuttle safety daytime driver/rider (Tues-Sun) (6/week)
- Shuttle nighttime driver (Tues-Sun) (6/week)
- Shuttle safety nighttime driver/rider (Tues-Sun) (6/week)
- 1 event manager on duty (7/week)
- 1 nighttime admissions supervisor (7/week)
- 3-5 nighttime cashiers (28/week)

River of Lights shifts are filled the following ways:

- Head cashiers – 15 shifts
- Administrative supervisors – 10 shifts
- Event supervisors – 10 shifts (no planning or call-out coverage shifts)
- Shuttle driver – 12 shifts (10 by City driver, 2 by temp staff)
- Shuttle safety driver/rider – 12 shifts (all temp staff)
- Other department managers – 7 shifts
- Temporary staff – 52 shifts

****Note that even with two event supervisors in 2022, we were only able to open the Aquarium/Garden for 4 daytime hours due to temporary staff shortages. The BioPark's intention is to open for the full 8 daytime hours in 2023 in order to provide the best service to our community.**

NEED FOR CURRENT STAFFING POSITIONS

Head Cashiers

Prior to the pandemic, the ABQ BioPark had one head cashier based at the Zoo five days per week. At that time, the BioPark's trains were operated by the New Mexico BioPark Society, and train tickets were sold by concessionaire SSA. With the need to address field trip reservations, 311 inquiries, ticket transfers, membership questions, general guest services and clerical support for the new electric shuttle seven days a week at both the Zoo and the Aquarium/Botanic Garden, we required additional head cashiers to cover all shifts.

- 14 shifts required (7 days each at the Aquarium/Garden and Zoo)
- 1 employee = 5 shifts covered, 9 shifts vacant, one site never staffed, one site unstaffed 2 days/week
- 3 employees = 15 shifts covered at both sites, the 1 extra shift is devoted to frontline service in a cashier booth to cover temp staff call-outs or vacancies

Event Supervisors

Prior to the pandemic, the BioPark had two permanent events employees plus dedicated temporary staff to cover after-hours events and all the necessary planning, which enabled the BioPark to host multiple private and community events each week at both sites. These events employees did not serve a role with admissions. At this time one year ago, the BioPark had only one event supervisor. Also, at this time one year ago, the ABQ BioPark had only two administrative supervisors rotating between Zoo and Aquarium/Botanic Garden admissions. This only provided coverage for 10 out of the 14 shifts (7 days each at the Aquarium/Garden and Zoo).

The sole event supervisor was covering the remaining 4 admissions shifts plus covering call-outs, leaving a maximum of one day for event management. Managers from other areas of the BioPark were providing after-hours event coverage to supplement this lack of event staff availability. This limited the BioPark to only one event per day and also increased overtime costs.

With the rising level of community and private events post-COVID, a second event supervisor was required to ensure that all after-hours events had a manager onsite and that all the necessary planning could be completed. It also allows for two events to take place simultaneously while also covering all admissions supervisor shifts.

- 14 admission shifts required (7 days each at the Aquarium/Garden and Zoo)
 - 2 administrative supervisors = 10 admissions shifts covered (5 each)
 - 2 event supervisors = 4 admissions shifts covered (2 each)
- 2 event supervisors = 6 shifts dedicated to event planning and management (3 each)

Guest Experience – Admissions and Events

Guest Experience Manager – EHC/E18 – Areas of oversight

- Oversee Admissions, Events, Education, Graphics, Marketing departments
- Facility-wide messaging
- Some event protocol related to internal events and conservation events
- Liaison for fundraising
- Community partnerships that impact BioPark operations
- Program evaluation
- Guest surveys and audience analytics



- Guest emergencies

BioPark Operations and Events Supervisor – EFA/E16 – Areas of oversight and Team Org Chart



Operations – Admissions

- Admissions policies and procedures
 - Including cashier SOPS, field trips, comps, refunds
- *Ticketing software administration – build tickets, forms, auto responses, manage users*
- Financial compliance – accuracy of reports; audit ready; custodian for cash
- Guest services – lost & found, 311s, generic emails, entry graphics, phone policies
- Zoo Base response readiness
- Liaison with NMBPS Membership

Operations – Shuttle

- *Daily operation policies and procedures*
- *Safety compliance*
- *Narration*
- *Shuttle ticket policies and procedures*

Operations – Tingley Beach

- Staffing
- Programming

Events

- Event policies and procedures

- Including but not limited to booking, implementation, marketing, prices, contracts
- Including but not limited to security, maintenance, animal care
- Including but not limited to role of manager on duty
- Liaison with SSA general manager
- Liaison with NMBPS Events
- *Liaison with Community Events*

Miscellaneous

- Lead weekly or biweekly team and one-on-one meetings as needed
- Policies and procedures for recruitment, hiring, onboarding, evaluating and discipline
- Schedule direct reports and oversee bids for shifts, vacations, overtime, etc.
- Uniforms – policies, supplies
- Submit annual, monthly, daily and as-requested reports
- City union contract compliance
- Serve as Admissions shift supervisor or Event Manager on Duty as needed

Event Supervisors – MD1/M14

Events

- Book private events
- Oversee contracts for private events
- Serve as manager on duty for most after-hours events
- Develop database or shared tracking system for event management
- Order security, maintenance, electrical, admissions, etc. for private & internal events
- Support Community Events by coordinating internal logistics
- Communicate with internal staff for City, Community and private events, including marketing, website, overtime requests, etc
- Prepare and send monthly and weekly event reminders
- Maintain master event calendar
- Coordinate with staff to support BioPark public events, such as World Oceans Day
- Develop and implement event policies and procedures
- Evaluate and report on event success
- Coordinate payments with Finance and/or SSA
- Meet regularly with catering staff to review event plans
- Respond to all event inquiries within 48 hours
- Provide client tours
- Regularly review market pricing and make recommendations for BioPark pricing
- Coordinate upkeep of event spaces and supplies
- Schedule Guest Experience staff as needed for event logistics

Admissions

- Serve as shift supervisors for admissions on designated days
- Serve as direct supervisor for one M13 and one C29
- Provide coverage for admissions as needed
- Oversee daily schedules for City Staff, working as one team to ensure coverage
- Develop onboarding protocol for new City and RivenRock/ATA/Tryfacta staff

- Review and approve policies developed by Administrative Supervisors
- Track attendance for monthly and annual reports
- Oversee ticketing system, may including building tickets, setting up users and adding discounts
- Maintain electronic ticketing equipment
- Maintain guest experience job descriptions
- Lead recruitment and hiring for RivenRock/ATA/Tryfacta staff
- Oversee group sales policies and procedures
- Oversee Lost & Found policies for valuables
- Update member promo codes for ticketing
- Submit graphics requests
- Shuttle duties TBD

Administrative Supervisors – MC5/M13

- Serve as shift supervisors for admissions
- Serve as primary supervisors for RivenRock/ATA/Tryfacta staff
- Prepare weekly schedule for RivenRock/ATA/Tryfacta staff
- Approve online timecards for RivenRock/ATA/Tryfacta staff
- Develop and implement field trip policies
- Train new staff according to policy and make recommendations for new policies
- Order and maintain supplies
- Update and distribute admissions SOPs
- Update and distribute cash handling SOPs
- Assist with recruitment and hiring
- Submit daily cashbook reports/transmittals/deposits
- Submit information to Finance for invoices and P.O.s
- Conduct cashier audits
- Coordinate monthly disposal of Lost & Found items
- Implement Lost & Found policies and procedures
- Conduct field trip email audits
- Conduct monthly employee ticket audits
- Maintain staff lists – phone number, uniform size, cash handling, emergency contact, COP, etc
- Issue guest experience crew uniforms
- Train new cashiers
- Train new phone operators
- Safe all-count every other Thursday
- Support afterhours event Admissions
- Turn on ticket sales on HMT two weeks out

Shift Supervisor – MD1 and MC5

- Conduct daily team meetings
- Count cash in and out each day
- Assign and rotate GX staff as cashiers/rangers/phones/shuttle drivers/shuttle cashiers

- Communicate with GOS regarding on-grounds assignments
- Ensure breaks and lunches are scheduled and taken
- Issue change as needed
- Run refunds, issue comps as needed
- Ensure that all staff are performing duties
- Send attendance report at end of day
- Monitor the work of the Shuttle ticket cashier
- Communicate with NMBPS regarding membership conversions
- Process all daily membership paperwork
- Open and close booths to meet demand, including expedited lines for members/online tickets

Head Cashier – CM5/C29

- Process P.O.s, save paperwork in Share Drive; include in daily paperwork for supervisor
- Ensure all Lost & Found items are documented and stored before end of day
- Coordinate weekly batches of field trip wristbands; set wristband rotation schedule
- Help order supplies
- Assist with training new cashiers/phone operators
- Lead cashier on assigned days as needed, which includes counting cash in/out for cashiers, reporting staff attendance to supervisor on duty, communicating site issues to supervisor on duty
- Cash handling including counting the safe, preparing the deposit, count cash in/out for cashiers
- Support shift supervisor to provide lunches and other breaks
- Maintain and monitor daily shuttle safety reports
- Monitor ticket sales for shuttle
- Prepare monthly shuttle reports
- Maintain and monitor shuttle driver logs
- Assist with dual verification of safe every two weeks
- Ensure cashier booths are stocked with all necessary supplies
- Assist with updating Master Calendar of events
- Assist with initial contact for event inquiries

At the Zoo

- Morning duties: open front gates, turn on tvs, update Duty Curator sign, open Ranger Room
- Answer phones
- Serve as backup cashier as needed
- Reply to all 311s within 30 minutes of receipt and close out all by end of day
- Sell memberships and reciprocal member tickets
- Look up member numbers to assist cashiers
- Assist with mail run as needed
- Review all weekly zoo field trips for accuracy and contact schools that don't meet requirements
- Respond to general biopark@cabq.gov emails

At the AQ/BG

- Serve as backup cashier as needed
- Work at front desk to receive guest inquiries
- Assist with membership sales and reciprocal tickets
- Respond to all field trip emails before end of day, to include sending booking confirmation email
- Work with RivenRock/ATA/Tryfacta staff to place bus drop-off/parking signs on weekdays
- Greet all arriving field trips and assist with entry
- Review all weekly AQ/BG field trips for accuracy and contact schools that don't meet requirements

Guest Operations Specialists (temporary staff)

- Delegate non-cashier assignments on grounds at Zoo and Aquarium/Garden and communicate frequently with shift supervisor
- Drive shuttle, rotating with other GOS during the day
- Ensure that shuttle ticket cashiers are in place
- Train new staff on ranger and shuttle duties
- Assist with minor guest infractions (ex: smoking, climbing rocks)
- Edit shuttle training manual content for new staff and new assignments

OIG Response: Director Sanchez's request to include the entire response as the managerial response despite clearly defining the response to the observation and recommendation can only be intended to discredit the report and recommendation. The information included in the managerial response, if it can be supported by evidence, may have been sufficient for the OIG to reach a conclusion regarding the alleged waste of resources, however, Director Sanchez did not offer, provide, or guide her staff to produce this information in response to the OIG's original request for the investigation.

The OIG is concerned that management as a whole has taken to using the management response as a means to question the integrity of the OIG's work without providing any evidence to support their claims, rather than responding to the recommendations to address a potential issue in their department. Our concern is evidenced by the responses provided 23-0018-C, 22-0203-C and now 22-0212-C. The OIG feels that this is a concern that warrants the attention of the AGO.