

State of New Hampshire



PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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APPEAL OF ALAN S. QUIMBY Department of Administrative Services Docket #92 -C-23

August 31, 1995

The New Hampshire Personnel Appeals Board (McNicholas, Bennett and Rule) met Wednesday, August 9, 1995, to hear the classification appeal of Alan Quimby, an employee of the Department of Administrative Services. Mr. Quimby was represented at the hearing by SEA Field Representative Stephen J. McCormack. Personnel Director Virginia A. Lamberton appeared on behalf of the Division of Personnel. Mr. Quimby was appealing the Division of Personnel's June 4, 1993 decision denying his request for reclassification of his position of Mail Clerk II, salary grade 8, position #10431.

At Mr. Quimby's hearing, Mr. McCormack argued that the March, 1993 request to reclassify Mr. Quimby's position did not ask for review of all the Mail Clerk II positions, only that held by the appellant. Mr. McCormack argued that this fact had come to his attention only recently, and that the Board could determine that the Director had not actually responded to the original request, and that a hearing on the matter therefore, was premature. Ms. Lamberton argued that when the request was made for review of Mr. Quimby's position, it was in the context of considering all five positions so classified. She argued that in spite of representations being made for the hearing that Mr. Quimby had responsibilities exceeding those of other Mail Clerk II incumbents, at the time of the review, the appellant and his supervisor told the Classification Analyst conducting the review that all the incumbents performed essentially the same work.

The information submitted by the parties neither proves nor disproves their respective positions. Inasmuch as the original request does not refer to a specific, proposed classification for Mr. Quimby, and indicates that the Mr. Quimby's position accountabilities are the same as those of other Mail Clerk II incumbents, the Board believes that the Director was correct in reviewing all the positions, and responding to the request for review by treating Mr. Quimby's classification questionnaire as representative of all the incumbents. Transmittal of Mr. Quimby's reclassification request was made via memorandum dated March 25, 1993, from Carol Tonkin, Administrator IV in the Department of Administrative Services, to Personnel Director Virginia Lamberton, which read as follows:

"Attached is a request for a position review from Alan S. Quimby, Mail Clerk II. I have attached an organizational chart for the Mail Room and a job description for this position. I have also attached a job description for the Mail Clerk II that was approved for position #10090 on November 20, 1992. The accountabilities for these positions are the same." (SEA Exhibit #3)

The questionnaire completed by Mr. Quimby and signed by Ms. Place, his immediate supervisor, Assistant Commissioner Hill and Administrator Tonkin, describes the basic purpose of Mr. Quimby's position as follows:

"To process and distribute incoming and outgoing mail for the 'majority of the state agencies that are within the Concord area."

In the Board's opinion, the basic purpose of Mr. Quimby's position as described by his department appears to be more consistent with the basic purpose described on the specification for the class Mail Clerk II, which is, "To collect, sort, weigh and distribute mail in a centralized mail room which supports several organizational units," than it is with the basic purpose of the Mailing Machine Operator, which is "To perform operational and functional duties necessary to complete bulk mailings for a specified organizational unit." In drawing that conclusion, the Board looked carefully at the Characteristic Duties and Responsibilities contained on each specification.

The Mailing Machine Operator classification contains the following list of characteristic duties and responsibilities:

- Operates computerized mailing machines to process envelopes and other postage.
- Sets control switches on computerized equipment such as external memory, data communicating, synchronizing and input and output recording devices.
- Checks machines and control panels on console for error messages and for faulty output or stoppage.
- Verifies program errors or malfunctions from program listings on console instruction and resumes or terminates the run by available options.
- Keeps and updates records of operation and machine down time.
- Trains back-up operators for mailing machine as required.

The duties and responsibilities each refer to operation, programming, troubleshooting and training personnel on a **computerized** mailing machine.

The Mail Clerk II, by comparison, has the following characteristic duties and responsibilities:

- Computes rates for insured, registered and special delivery mail.
- Sorts, weighs and rates all classes of mail preparatory to stamping or utilization of postage.
- Requests postage refunds monthly from the local postmasters.
- Picks up and delivers inter-departmental and intra-departmental mail.
- Performs pick-up and deliveries from the post office, bank and other outside state agencies.
- Assists in other clerical duties involving the operation of the central mail room.

These duties are far more consistent with Mr. Quimby's description in his position classification questionnaire. (SEA Exhibit 4) When asked about the job's physical demands and **working** conditions, Mr. Quimby stated, "Heavy lifting required in processing mail that is put into mail cages." Asked for the type of "new or unexpected problems" he would normally be required to solve, he stated, "Daily separate other depts mail that incorrectly comes to the mailroom. Sending fax letters that take away from our regular duties." Where the questionnaire asks for specific examples of what happens when an error is found in his work, he answered, "First is to locate the error and then take corrective measures to assume [sic] mail will not be delayed or rejected. Examples; incorrect postage, wrong date, wrong address or wrong address format,

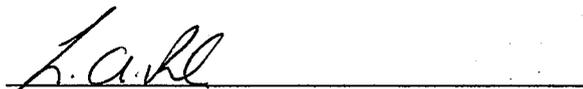
no return address, etc." All in all, these duties appear to be quite consistent with the characteristic duties and responsibilities found on the Mail Clerk II specification.

In consideration of the information presented by the parties,, the Board voted unanimously to deny Mr. Quimby's appeal. The Board understands that the addition of computerized mailing equipment and a fax machine have altered the manner in which work is performed in the Mail Room at the Department of Administrative Services. However, the Board does not believe that those technical enhancements have altered the appellant's duties and responsibilities sufficiently to warrant reclassification of his position to Mailing Machine Operator, salary grade 10, or to require reclassification of his position from its current class. The Board also was not persuaded that Mr. Quimby's duties and responsibilities at the time of his position review were markedly different from those of his co-workers, or that they required his being classified or compensated differently from the other Mail Clerk II incumbents. Therefore, to the extent that the Division of Personnel's Requests for Findings of Fact and Rulings of Law are consistent with the decision above, they are granted.

THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD


Patrick J. McNicholas, Chairman


Mark J. Bennett, Commissioner


Lisa A. Rule, Commissioner

cc: Virginia A. Lamberton, Director of Personnel
Stephen J. McCormack, SEA Field Representative,
Donald S. Hill, Assistant Commissioner, Administrative Services