

CITY OF NORWALK PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES

FEBRUARY 22, 2006

PRESENT: Herb Grant, Chairman; Rick McQuaid; Joanne Romano; Gwen Briggs

STAFF: Sara LeTournea, Personnel Director; John Schlosser, Personnel Administrator; Tom Hamilton, Finance Director

OTHERS: Police Chief Riling; Fire Chief McCarthy; Diane Lauricella; Mayor Moccia; Peter Nolan; Jeff Spar; Terry Tyler; Peter Sketella; Craig Shoop; Tami Hodges; Rebecca Sielman; Mark Lepore.

PUBLIC HEARING

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS/CHANGES TO
ORDINANCE LIST POSITIONS**

The Chairman called the public hearing to order at 7:30 pm noting the absence of Rev. Olmstead-Sawyer and Mr. Miklave. He proceeded to explain the changes in the ordinance list with regard to the Executive Secretary, the City Clerk and the Grants Co-ordinator. He asked for any questions or comments from the public.

Diane Lauricella stated that she wished to speak about the position of Grants Coordinator noting that the time has come to re-establish this position. She suggested that the Personnel Director contact some of the professional organizations when trying to find the right person for the job.

Mayor Moccia thanked the Chairman and committee members. He noted that Martha, the Executive Secretary is a most valuable person and deserves the pay increase. With regard to the Grants Coordinator, the Mayor said this is an essential position in the city and to ensure they find the right person he suggested independent screening stating that this is not a political position.

Peter Nolan echoed previous comments saying that the Grants Coordinator will be a great asset.

Terry Tyler stated that she was very happy to hear the Mayor state that this position will not be political and was in support of the position. She further commented on the number of law-suites by previous employees and suggested more stringent testing.

With no more comments from the public the Chairman closed the public hearing at 7.50 pm.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8pm and thanked those who participated in the public hearing. He commented that there have been some other changes regarding the structure of the grades that make up the ordinance list noting that it now becomes more systematic.

Mr. McQuaid asked about the Registrar of Voters, as he did not see them included on the ordinance list.

Ms. LeTourneau replied that they had not been included because there had been no revision.

Mr. McQuaid then asked at what point did the Registrar of Voters last receive an increase.

At this point in the meeting a reference was made to the minutes of the previous meeting and the Chairman saw it prudent to approve them before partaking in further discussion.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM MEETING OF JANUARY 25, 2006

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 25, 2006 AS PRESENTED.

** MS. ROMANO SECONDED.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. McQuaid suggested that the Registrar of Voters had not received an increase since 2002 and asked when they would get back on track.

Ms. LeTourneau stated that an increase had been voted upon in the previous year, however this would not take place until this year; she added that no increase could be voted on during the term of the elected individual.

There was brief discussion regarding the time of the last increase for the Registrar of Voters.

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED THAT THE ORDINANCE LIST BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR ACTION AS THEIR NEXT MEETING.

** MS. BRIGGS SECONDED.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

REVIEW/DISCUSSION ON REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION FOR ORDINANCE LIST

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED APPROVAL THAT THE REVISED JOB DESCRIPTIONS BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR ACTION AT THEIR NEXT MEETING.

** MS. ROMANO SECONDED.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

REVIEW/DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED SALARY RANGES FOR ORDINANCE LIST

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED APPROVAL THAT THE PROPOSED SALARY RANGES BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR ACTION AT THEIR NEXT MEETING.

** MS. ROMANO SECONDED.

Mr. Grant stated that he has some concerns regarding the already established salary of the City Clerk; he also asked what she had done between October and the present without the presence of a Grants Coordinator.

The Mayor replied that the City Clerk had carried out the work that was necessary and that because of the time frame she had received the established salary.

Mr. Grant referred to an article in the newspaper regarding the Assistant to the Mayor and that he intended to leave that position. He asked if this was true and if so when did the Assistant to the Mayor plan to leave.

The Mayor replied that it was true and the Assistant to the Mayor would leave before the end of the year.

Mr. Grant asked if this issue would go before the Board of Estimate and Taxation.

The Mayor replied that since the current Assistant to the Mayor has not been drawing a salary there are funds in that account therefore he suggested that this would not have to go before the Board of Estimate and Taxation for a special appropriation.

Mr. Hamilton confirmed the information to be correct and instead of a special appropriation it would only require a transfer of funds.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Moccia added that the City is well served by the current City Clerk.

PROPOSAL FOR FIRST RESPONDER EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The Chairman introduced Peter Sketella, Tami Hodges and Chris Shoop from the EAP.

Chief Rilling stated that this is a new level of service and described the benefits of the program.

Mark Lepore, head of the police union said there had been various times when the EAP had been used and in his experience it is a valuable asset.

Mr. Sketella gave a full description of the services noting that it is a specific service for the police and fire departments. He handed out a brochure.

Ms. Hodges went over the highlights of the brochure speaking in detail about the high level of training of counselors to be able to deal with very specific situations.

Chief McCarthy said there can be very trying times and being able to utilize the EAP is very important.

Mr. Hall stated that Mr. Shoop had been a tremendous asset that had benefited many and that he supported it. He added that it would be beneficial to train a few people in each department.

Mr. Shoop said he had been surprised by the number of times the police had used the services and handed out statistics illustrating this.

Mr. McQuaid questioned the information asking if it was confidential. He referred to Corporation Counsel who suggested that it was. Mr. McQuaid asked for the statistics to be retracted.

Ms. Romano said that growing up as the daughter of a police officer this type of service would have been very beneficial. She said it was an excellent program and commended all involved.

Mr. McQuaid commended the union representatives for coming to the meeting.

Ms. Briggs asked what the cost of the program would be and where would the funds be coming from.

Ms. Sketella replied that the cost would \$30 per employee, per year. He added that the \$30 would cover the employee and his/her family members.

Mr. Grant asked if they combined the contract for the police and fire departments would that reduce the cost.

Mr. Sketella said it would not; it would be \$30 regardless.

There was discussion about the number of times that the service could be utilized over a year.

Chief Rilling said for the first year the funds would come from the asset forfeiture fund making a zero cost to the city; it would have to be worked into the budget after the first year.

Mr. McQuaid suggested that the service needed to be available 24/7.

Mr. Grant asked if this covered dispatchers.

Ms. Hodges replied that it did including civilian dispatchers.

Mr. Grant stated that he thought the program to be commendable. He commented that his concerns were that there is currently only one counselor, there has to be an extremely high level of confidentiality and if selected that they re-visit the fee rate and include information about the dispatchers.

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO TABLE THE ITEM TO THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING.

** MS. BRIGGS SECONDED.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE PROPOSED LABOR CONTRACT AGREEMENT LOCAL 830-FIREFIGHTERS.

** MS. ROMANO SECONDED.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The following went into executive session at 9:05 pm: Herb Grant, Rick McQuaid, Joanne Romano, Gwen Briggs, Sara LeTourneau, Tom Hamilton, Becky Sielman, Chief McCarthy, Kelly Straniti and Mayor Moccia. The committee reconvened into public session at 9:55 pm.

ACTION ON PROPOSED AGREEMENT

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED THAT THE FIREFIGHTERS' CONTRACT AS PROPOSED BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL AT THEIR NEXT MEETING ON FEBRUARY 28, 2006.

** MR. ROMANO SECONDED.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Moccia said he anticipated a large crowd at the next meeting and suggested they meet in the concert hall.

ADJOURNMENT

** MR. BRIGGS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MS. ROMANO SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Kye
Telesco Secretarial

