

FINAL

**CITY OF NORWALK
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
JULY 18, 2018**

ATTENDANCE: Barbara Smyth, Chair; Beth Siegelbaum; Doug Stern;
Ernie Dumas; Gregory Burnett (7:05PM)

STAFF: Ray Burney, Director of Personnel

OTHERS: Karen Lyons, Stuart Wells; Diane Lauricella

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Smyth called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and called the roll. A quorum was present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Stuart Wells, Registrar of Voters

Mr. Wells stated that it is his understanding that the Registrar of Voters salary is up for consideration, and said that Norwalk is the sixth largest city in the election and the closest city to Norwalk in the terms of the amount of voters is Hartford. He said the issue with their pay is it has not kept up with inflation and they have lost ground where everyone else in the city has kept up, and they are 12% below inflation and the benefits have been reduced and the workload has increased.

Diane Lauricella

Ms. Lauricella stated in the past there would be an opportunity for the public to weigh-in prior to the Common Council approving upgrades and improvements of salaries for those of the ordinance list, and the public has now been left out of the process with the exception of coming to the Personnel Committee for public participation. She said there needs to be a robust personnel review process and some do not think people automatically deserve a 3% raise because in the real world that does not happen. She said that she would like the committee to encourage and consider holding a public hearing prior to voting on the ordinance positions.

Ms. Lauricella stated that unfortunately the senior staff has decided not to ask for public input in a meaningful way before the current choice of option two was decided. She said she is in favor of reorganization or personnel realignment because it is good to modernize but she is not pleased that there has been no request for true public input. She said in other towns when they had such a major reorganization or reshuffling of departments that sometimes the leadership has to interview for their position which would provide an opportunity to include additional requirements such as a Master Degree and other types of certifications, and noted that in DPW operations does not require a Masters Degree and we should not be dumbing down any of the senior positions. She asked that the committee request in writing of the Adhoc Committee not to push forward for a major vote. She said that the part time grants position should and should be a fulltime position and hopes that it will one day be an action and discussion item for this committee, and hopes the position will go under the Chief Financial Officer because there will be better data and more accountability; the conservation position should not be under economic development unless you decide to change and expand that chiefs role to economic development and land use because conservation should be expanded to more than just in the wetlands; under Transportation, Traffic and Parking does not belong under economic development and in her opinion belongs under Public Works; and lastly she cannot find where recycling is included and it is a major way to save money for the taxpayer and is an education element for the kids. She congratulated the new Personnel Chair and wished her luck.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 15, 2018

- ** MS. SIEGELBAUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) IN FAVOR TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MR. STERN AND MR. DUMAS).**

4. DISCUSSION ON STATUS OF CITY REORG

Mr. Birney stated there have been two meetings with the Adhoc Committee regarding the reorganization and at those meetings they decided to piece meal some of their consent and approval of the proposed reorganization. He said that they have agreed on the concept for creating the Operations and Public Works Department pending their review of position descriptions which has been provided to them. He said at the last meeting they had discussed the Economic and Community Development Department and after interviewing various staff they have voted to move forward with the Economic and Community Development aspect if the proposed reorganization. He said what has yet to be acted on by the Adhoc Committee is the Community Services aspect of it and that is for a follow-up meeting.

Mr. Birney discussed the timeline and stated that even though the July 1st date has come and gone this is still an initiative that they want to get done now as opposed to later for a lot of reasons, and not the least of which is that we cannot recruit to replace Bruce Chimento in his current capacity until we have a position description that has been authorized by the Common Council, and the same is for the Chief of the Economic and Community Development position. He said those two positions are very critical to where the city is going to go and to address the city's needs and want to reorganize the city in a way they think rationally establishes chains of command in a fashion that puts like duties, functions and services together and clusters them under a department head who is responsible for those service deliveries to the citizens of the city. He said that they want to facilitate this and will be asking the Ordinance, Finance and Personnel Committee consider holding a joint meeting within the next three weeks prior to the August 14th Common Council meeting. He said at that meeting they would present final forum of the materials and prior to that they will take feedback and input from any Common Council member that wants to give it on those documents and present it for final vote on the August 14th Common Council meeting for a vote.

Mr. Birney presented the job descriptions of the Chief of Operations and Public Works, Director of Recreation and Parks, Superintendent of Public Property and Parks, Superintendent of Recreation, Superintendant of Operations and Highways and the Chief of

Staff. He said when the Adhoc committee was presented with the city's proposed reorganization there was much discussion as to how to fold Recreation and Parks into Operations. He said the city's initial proposal was to separate the responsibility for the recreation programs away from the maintenance side and the Adhoc Committee did not embrace that and has asked that a reorganization be perused that takes what is currently now known as Recreation and Parks and move it under DPW in total. He presented the financial implications which reflect back to Mr. Barron's analysis that will need to be approved by the Finance Committee.

Mr. Birney discussed the ordinance changes and said in order to effectuate the entire proposed reorganization five ordinances will have to be changed or drafted. He said the Mr. Kydes wanted to make the committee aware that not all of the ordinances have been endorsed by the Adhoc committee yet, and the only ones that they have endorsed are the Operations and Public Works and the Economic and Community Development.

Mr. Birney presented the original organizational chart that has been modified and said when they get to the point of seeking an official vote and approval that the committee will have a document that is up to the minute. He said that there are three job descriptions the Chief of Economic and Community Development, the Transportation Planner and the Director of Transportation and Mobility and Parking and they are new to the city or revised in the Economic and Community Development department that the Adhoc Committee has endorsed. Ms. Smyth asked if there are salary ranges for the positions. Mr. Birney said "yes" and is included in Mr. Barron's analysis from May 21st and all of the detail will be provided to the committee prior to the vote.

Mr. Stern stated that if the goal is to get most or all of this done in short order the joint meeting should be scheduled as soon as possible as well as providing the backup materials. Mr. Stern also requested that the minutes from the Adhoc Committee meetings be sent to the committee.

5. DISCUSSION ON ORDINANCE PAY PLAN

Mr. Birney presented the Ordinance Pay Plan that was approved and has been in place for the past two years and refers to the Ordinance and Elected positions. He said that there are less than 20 employees that are referred to as Ordinance and are the positions that are non-unionized and the salary adjustments are done by virtue of authorization of this pay plan which is now expired. He said a new pay plan needs to be established and on July 1, 2018, the Ordinance employees did not receive a pay increase unlike the unionized employees' who did

and by the term of the collecting bargaining contract July 2016-July 2020 and on every January 1st they will receive a 1.1% increase and every July 1st will receive a 1.25% increase in their base rate of pay for the duration of the contract. He said last year the Personnel Committee and the Common Council had approved a 2.35% increase for the Ordinance employees. He said that the pay plan has pay ranges and have increased by 3% from one year to another and that has been the historical practice for the past 6 years. He said when an employee is hired in an Ordinance position we do not go past the midpoint as an offer and the pay plan states the offer should come in on the low end of the range expect with due consideration being given by the Personnel Director to increase that. He said since he has been here the Ordinance positions offers that have been made have been made at the midpoint or below. He said presuming the Mayor approves the 2.35% general wage increase and a 3% increase in the ranges for the next three years consistent with past practice is what will most likely be presented to the committee, but said there are problems with this pay structure and used the example of his Executive Assistant and presented her salary history and said there are five executive secretaries in the NMEA union, and had she been hired into the union what are started at a higher rate of pay and given the Ordinance employees increase's and the unionized wage increases her salary is \$10,429 less than that of the union employee because under the union contract there is a wage progression to the full rate, and there is no equivalent provision in the Ordinance Pay Plan that address that. He said this holds true for everyone on the Ordinance list and he thinks there is two ways the city can address this and one is to give the Mayor latitude to include a portion of the bonus to the annual compensation. Mr. Burnett asked what the bonus is based upon. Mr. Birney said that it is based upon the Mayors assessment of job performance over the past year. Mr. Burnett asked if it is solely based on his assessment or does anyone else provide input. Mr. Birney said it would be based on the assessment and recommendation of who the employee reports to but it would be the Mayors final word on what the amount is. He said there is a bonus pool that is a portion of the Ordinance Pay Plan that gross's out at \$50,000 and each individual is not supposed to get more than 5% of their annual pay as a bonus. Mr. Burnett asked if there are set parameters that are shared with the employee at the beginning of the year. Mr. Birney said "no" and that there is a performance review process that sets objectives and allows the Supervisor to evaluate the employee on standard and specific element of their job. He said the other way to address the issues with the pay plan is to establish a mathematical formula by which the employees under the Ordinance Pay Plan like the employees covered by the unions go through a wage progression up to a maximum amount.

Mr. Birney said that the city needs to establish a new pay plan and that this committee has to authorize it and he will be making a formal proposal to them and it will adjust the ranges as they were presented and will propose an increase of 2.35% wage increase based upon satisfactory performance, and the standard \$50,000 bonus pool for the Mayor to distribute. He said it will also include some method to allow employees below a certain level in the Ordinance positions to have additional compensation in their rate of pay either on a discursion

or automatic basis. Mr. Burnett requested that the proposal include a bottom line total amount of what the cost would be to move the proposal forward.

Mr. Birney said the compensation for the Registrar of Voters is established by this committee and currently they make \$57,105, and if nothing changes they will receive a raise to \$58,800 and if this committee and the Common Council endorse the changing of the salary ranges by 3% then their rate of pay will increase to \$60,582. He presented the rates of pay from the Connecticut Conference of Municipality every Registrar of Voter and in discussions with him Mr. Wells and Ms. Lyons will be requesting that instead of being paid at the tenth percentile to be compensated at the 50% percentile which would give them a compensation of \$70,894. Mr. Stern asked Mr. Birney in his opinion if the work load or commitment time has increased since it was last reviewed. Mr. Birney said he does not have the knowledge of that but he will research it. Mr. Burnett requested updated rates of pay from Connecticut Conference of Municipality. Mr. Birney said that he will have a telephone survey done to try and get accurate data from the towns.

**** MR. STERN MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Birney said Mr. Gilden who is the city's Comptroller is retiring in November and there is an offer out to someone and they are hoping she accepts it this week and if so, they would like her to spend as much time as possible with Mr. Gilden in transition. He discussed the typical process and said due to the timing issues if she accepts the offer this week he will be requesting from the committee to allow her to be presented to the Common Council without having gone through the Personnel Committee for expediency. Mr. Stern suggested holding a special meeting prior to the Common Council.

6. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. STERN MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk
Personnel Committee
Regular Meeting
July 18, 2018
Page 6