

**CITY OF NORWALK PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**NOVEMBER 29, 2006**

**ATTENDANCE:** Herbert Grant, Chairman; Gwen Briggs; Fred Bondi; Joanne Romano (arrived 8:14 p.m.)

**STAFF:** James Haselkamp, Director of Personnel & Labor Relations; John Schlosser

**GUESTS:** Jeffrey Spahr, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Peter Nolin, Corporation Counsel

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 8:12 p.m. by the Chairman who mentioned that because there was not a quorum present, there would be a discussion and any actions that were needed to be taken would be made to the full council.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 27, 2006 MEETING**

The Chairman said that the minutes will not be approved unless there was another person there to form the quorum. Joanne Romano arrived at 8:14 p.m. which formed the quorum necessary to approve the minutes and allowed the Counsel to function fully.

**\*\* MS. BRIGGS MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH ONE ABSTENTION (BONDI)**

**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Chairman asked if everyone accepted the schedule of the Personnel Committee Meetings, that will be every 4th Wednesday each month at 8:00 p.m., everyone accepted the schedule of meetings as presented for 2007. The Chairman suggested and sought a recommendation from the Board that the Personnel Committee meeting to be held on December 27, 2006 be cancelled. Everyone was in favor of canceling the December 27, 2006 Personnel Committee meeting. Therefore the Personnel Committee meeting to be held December 27, 2006 was officially cancelled.

**REQUEST FOR SALARY ADJUSTMENT FOR DIANE BELTZ-JACOBSON**

The Chairman received a request from the Corporation Counsel, Mr. Nolin, with

endorsement by the Deputy Corporation Counsel, Mr. Spahr for a salary increase for Diane Beltz-Jacobson. The Chairman confirmed with the Corporation Counsel that Diane Beltz-Jacobson was a part-time employee and she has now become a full-time employee. The Corporation Counsel confirmed and added that she was a full-time employee for 15 or 16 years and then became a part-time employee for two years. The Chairman confirmed with the Corporation Counsel that there was recruitment activity underway for additional Assistant Attorney. The Chairman brought the concern of the Corporation Counsel, which was that the salary that Diane Beltz-Jacobson would be receiving is below the salary being offered in the recruitment activity currently underway for that position.

The Chairman made a recommendation to the Board, that whatever action the Board takes be retro-active to this position to make the adjustment; As the Comprehensive Plan moves forward, there will be automatic adjustments once the plan is approved. If she makes the higher prior to the implementation of the plan, then the Committee agrees to make it retro-active to adjust (Diane Beltz-Jacobson) salary. Everyone on the Committee was in favor. The Corporation Counsel agreed as well.

The Chairman asked for a motion; that based on their approval of the Overall Comprehensive Plan presented to them that night, that they are willing to adjust Diane Beltz-Jacobson salary in accordance with the new schedule so that she is above whatever the new position hire is going to be (the entry level position). Mr. Haselkamp said the proposed range for that position starts at \$90,000 – \$120,000, he wasn't sure where she would go on the range, making clear that he had no authority to place her on the range at this moment. He didn't have a problem placing her at \$95,000, because that salary would already be in the current range, which is \$87,000 - \$122,000, so \$95,000 is still below the midpoint. Mr. Haselkamp wanted to know how much above the \$90,000 are they (Corporate Counsel) wanting to go. The Chairman clarified the procedure by stating the Mr. Nolin, Corporation Counsel, would have to make a recommendation as to what he'd like to see Diane Beltz-Jacobson receive, and Mr. Haselkamp would have to be the gatekeeper to determine where that recommendation falls within the range to stay competitive, whether it be first, second, or third quartile. The Chairman said the Board wanted to make it clear that they wanted her salary adjusted as part of the plan, pending the plan's approval.

**\*\* MS. ROMANO MOVED THAT BASED ON THE APPROVAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BEING PRESENTED; IN THAT PACKAGE THERE ARE SALARY GRADES AND RANGES. WHAT THE COMMITTEE WILL DO IS ADJUST DIANE BELTZ-JACOBSON SALARY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEW SCHEDULE SO THAT SHE IS ABOVE THE ENTRY LEVEL POSITION.  
\*\* MOTION MOVED UNANIMOUSLY**

**DISCUSSION OF POLICE CONTRACT (EXECUTIVE SESSION)**

The Chairman said that the Police Contract would be tabled because there was no ratification.

## PAY PLAN AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

The Chairman prefaced this topic by recalling that the citizens wanted the Board to come up with a comprehensive salary administrative plan, which includes salary ranges, informative evaluations, merit increase system. The Board in turn said they would have a plan in place before the end of the year to present to the Council. Mr. Haselkamp (Director/Personnel & Labor Relations) was then introduced to walk the Committee through the Pay Plan and Performance Evaluation System that was developed. Mr. Haselkamp stated that one of the only cities he's aware of that has a pay plan for department heads was Stamford. Therefore he modeled part of the plan after their system with changes that reflect the differences relative to Norwalk. The plan is expanded to cover the Ordinance group. The major component is the pay plan, the merit matrix, and revised evaluation plan. The pay plan, deals with hiring, pay ranges, and what happens when people get promoted from one job to another. The nuts and bolts of the pay plan are located on pages 3, 4, and 5.

In the salary survey and the cover letter he indicated that one of the concerns of using salary surveys was that sample was very small. Departments had different views on whether an individual was part-time or full time, or if someone as himself had job responsibilities in two places. He gave them the data so that they'd have some supporting documentation to look at when they looked at the ranges. He's created a system that will move the ranges as opposed to what is being done where they were taken up on an adhoc basis. A system will now be in place which automatically each year adjusts the ranges. Mr. Haselkamp then directed everyone to turn to page three which dealt with salary increase process, which he stated he'd get into later on in the meeting. He mentioned the evaluations would tie in to the merit matrix. The other big component would be the elected officials. He directed everyone to page five to look at the ranges as it regards elected officials. A minimum of grade eight for the Mayor, a minimum of grade four for Registrar of Voters, and a minimum of grade one for Town Clerk. After the next election (next December 31st) the person, for example the Mayor, elected would make the \$100,000 range, that's indicated on the minimum.

The American Compensation Association, now called the World of Work has an annual index that was put out, that projects what the increases will look like for the following year. What is being proposed with all ranges is that every January 1st the ranges would be adjusted based on the World of Work annual index projection of increases. For example the offices of executives would go up 4%, which means the entire grid would move up 4%. This doesn't apply to this year, because the plan will not be approving them for this year. Mr. Bondi brought to the attention of the Board that the Registrar did not receive an increase in four years due to the elections. They are not elected the same year as the Mayor. The Chairman said that the plan would address and rectify that issue, seeing that it addresses the election years. Mr. Haselkamp proceeded with presenting a

hybrid system for the evaluation process. The first part of the evaluation process has a performance factor which most companies use today, which is outlined in the manual that they have for supervisors.

What Mr. Haselkamp did was come up with a grading scale that gets some buy in from a system that currently doesn't have a buy in. The system currently has difficulty measuring things but as it gets to the point where it has more sophisticated systems in place and we can measure things more easily, then they'll be able to look at more sophisticated objectives. Without data and some criteria there will be no meaningful evaluation, Mr. Haselkamp has re-weighted the system based upon a more formal evaluation process. Mr. Nolin, Corporation Counsel asked when objectives are set. Mr. Grant responded by directing everyone's attention to the timeline in the back of the packet which gave timelines for all activities. He proceeded to inform everyone that the unique difference that is being proposed was that the evaluations, goal settings and all other aspects of it is going to be the responsibility of the department and the department heads. Also what the Board will be looking at now more closely is how much money will be allocated or would have to be apart of the budget process for increases.

Mr. Haselkamp proceeded to discuss the budget process using the timeline of the packet. He began by stating that in October will be when the normal activity for the new cycle would happen. In October of each year, they would develop a draft of the merit matrix and it would go to the Counsel for approval. Therefore identifying what the raises would be for the following July. In November they'd need to come up with what the budget would need to fund the adjustments for the group of employees that's covered by this. In December Mr. Haselkamp would adjust the elected officials if it is required in that given year, in January the ranges would be adjusted based on the index presented before. In April the Personnel Department would forward the evaluation process and forms to the department. They will meet one on one with the raters initially until they get familiar before they meet with the employees. In the meeting they'd discuss, the process, what they'd have to talk about, and helping them with the weighted process. They'll be able to sit with the employees afterward. Forms will be sent out in May and will be due back to us on May 31st. If we don't get them back by May 31st, then raises will not be issued. They'd then sit with forms and make sure that the math is correct, and determine based on the merit matrix what the adjustment would be. A letter is sent out to the employee stating employees raise which would start July 1st. Upon the plan being adopted, within 45 days, they would provide citywide training to all raters and employees that this covers, so they'll understand how this works. Mr. Haselkamp said that after a year he'd sit down again and see the plan is working and make any necessary changes.

Mr. Grant told the Board keeps in mind that the Council agreed that once they've slotted in grades and group the positions accordingly, it minimizes how many individuals the Mayor had to evaluate. There's a greater concentration that's going to occur to determine whether the goals and objectives that set forth are clearly for that particular position and not just a blanket where everybody's the same. This plan is now moving the City in that direction and a year from now the Council can look back and tweak it until people are comfortable with the process. Mr. Bondi raised a concern that it would be expensive for

the residents of Norwalk if everyone is getting a great increase based on merit. The taxes would be higher. Mr. Haselkamp assured the Board that based on the plan, that his concern of everyone getting 5.5% increase would not be an issue. Ms. Briggs then asked was the plan already implemented in Stamford, and Mr. Haselkamp told her that their plan is substantially similar to our plan. Ms. Briggs wanted to know what their experience was. Mr. Haselkamp informed her that they have a much smaller group and that Mayor's response was that if they were not near the top, then he should not have them as his department head. That was his rationale and his response towards the criticism concerning those raises. If the objective setting is done correctly you will have something identifiable that someone did or didn't get done or something that should add some significance to the city

The Corporation Counsel, Mr. Nolin and the Deputy Corporation Counsel Mr. Spahr shared a concern regarding employees getting a large lump sum increase and that the grade 7 pay range was too low. Mr. Haselkamp assured them that unless the employee was at the high end of the range to begin with then it's foreseeable that they may reach the point of lump sum. Mr. Grant interjected that according to the plan the key thing is that the range is always fluid. The example given was that if an employee is at the midpoint of the range today, tomorrow they won't be, because once the range moves you're going to drop back. Mr. Grant brought to the Corporation Counsel, Mr. Nolin and the Deputy Corporation Counsel Mr. Spahr attention that the system we have in place now, does not allow us to have the fluidity necessary and what is being put in place is maintaining a fluidity so that the ranges move ahead of the individual. Mr. Nolin said he now understood it has been made clear. Mr. Grant asked if there were any other questions before moving forward. Mr. Nolin, Corporation Counsel, said that the minimum for grade 7 minimum which is at \$87,000 which is what he is now advertising the position for and what Diane Beltz-Jacobson will be moving into needed to be changed because if the plan is implemented she will be making below minimum. The minimum on the plan is \$90,000. Mr. Haselkamp stated that under the plan, the Corporation Counsel had the power to make the adjustments.

The Corporation Counsel wanted to have a separate section included in the plan called transitions to authorize adjustments to salaries by the Director of the Corporation Counsel as a one time transition. Mr. Nolin stated that it would save them from four votes and a separate motion, depending on a public hearing on this change to see if it's actually required. Mr. Grant asked the Corporation Counsel regarding a public hearing; he wanted to know on what part would there be a public hearing. Mr. Nolin, Corporation Counsel said normally when you adjust the ordinance list salaries you have a public hearing, but if you adopt this procedure you're not going to have hearing to adjust each salary anymore. Mr. Nolin said he wasn't sure it was necessary to hold a public hearing, but wouldn't want to see them get the plan all the way to the floor and have someone ask if there was a public hearing held on it. The Chairman then asked Mr. Nolin, Corporation Counsel, to look into if a public meeting was required and let the Council know.

The Deputy Corporation Counsel, Mr. Spahr had a problem with an individual in the Corporate Counsel receiving a \$10,000 raise. Mr. Grant said that when he sat down with

the Personnel Department and looked at the salary surveys and the data that was presented, with this information we are in a competitive market. The one thing we cannot do from a public service standpoint is compare ourselves to the private sector. So the Council has to look at other municipalities as it relates to this plan and that's what was done when they did the survey.

The Deputy Corporation Counsel said that his salary was below the minimum as well as another Assistant in the Corporation Counsel when you factor in experience. He stated it looked as if all the salaries in the Law Department were being adjusted except for one and he believes that his position is undervalued. The Deputy Corporation Counsel, Mr. Spahr asked when would be an appropriate day to discuss this matter. The Chairman advised Mr. Spahr of the procedure which was that he would discuss his concern with the Corporation Counsel, Mr. Nolin, and then the Corporation Counsel would make a recommendation to the Committee. The Corporation Counsel, Mr. Nolin then addressed the Committee stating that this would be a one time need and given that every other position in the Department has been adjusted that it makes sense that we adjust the Deputy Corporation Counsel salary. The Chairman said that hypothetical if we make the adjustment and the plan is put in place he's going to be at "\$X". The Chairman advised the Corporation Counsel that he'd have to set goals and objectives to ensure that the aspect of the Deputy Corporation Counsel performance meet those objectives that they've established, and then he'd be eligible for an increase, which would move him again.

The Corporation Counsel recommended to the Committee moving the Deputy Corporate Counsel , Mr. Spahr from grade 7 to grade 8 and he also recommended a one time \$10,000 adjustment to his position and he'd be happy to follow that up with a memo. Mr. Grant said that in moving him, he would be moving him above all the department heads. Mr. Grant asked is there any duties or responsibilities in the job that has increased, which would cause us to move a grade. Mr. Grant suggested that the Corporation Counsel look at the job specs to confirm that the job description carries more weight than what is there at the present time. He said the analysis should be done with Mr. Haselkamp to see what changes has occurred to move him up a grade. It has to be that job responsibilities have increased and the load has increased to give it more weight in order to move it to another grade. Mr. Haselkamp stated that, in all due respect, it is unheard of that the Deputy Corporate Counsel is above the Department Heads in a Municipality. Mr. Haselkamp had no objections to the salary adjustment, but had concern about placing the Deputy Corporate Counsel above the Department heads. To change the grade would make him equal to all the department heads. Mr. Grant stated that based on all the input received, he believes it's appropriate to request the adjustment of the salary one time within the range he is slotted so that it is competitive. The Corporation Counsel Mr. Nolin agreed and stated that is exactly what he was asking. There was a motion made to make the adjustment

**\*\* MR. GRANT MOTIONED TO MAKE A ONE TIME ADJUSTMENT TO THE DEPUTY CORPORATE COUNSEL SALARY BASED ON THE CORPORATION**

COUNSEL, MR. NOLIN'S RECOMMENDATION.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

\*\* MR. GRANT MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE PLAN AND MOVE IT TO THE FULL COUNCIL, PREDICATED ON THE INTERPRETATION FROM THE CORPORATION COUSEL TO WHETHER WE SHOULD HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The Corporation Counsel stated that he would get the information to them regarding the public hearing this week. Mr. Grant stated that this goes before the Council on the 12th. The Corporation Counsel, Mr. Nolin asked if we recommend a public meeting would it make sense that it be made on the same night. Everyone agreed. Mr. Grant directed everyone's attention to the proposed resolution to go before the Council. It basically says that, the director of Personnel & Labor Relations would be the gatekeeper to consult with individuals and be the monitor and advisor and coordinator to keep everything in sync throughout the process.

\*\* MS. BRIGGS MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE RESOLUTION THAT WOULD GO BEFORE THE COUNCIL. ALSO THAT THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL AND LABOR RELATIONS, IS THE MONITOR, ADVIOSOR AND COORDINATOR; AND WILL BE THE GATEKEEPER TO CONSULT WITH INDIVIDUALS IN REGARDS TO ALL PROCESS OF THE PLAN.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business discussed

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Vivia Gayle  
Telesco Secretarial Services