

CITY OF NORWALK PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES

OCTOBER 27, 2004

ATTENDANCE: Douglas Sutton, Chairman; Rick McQuaid; Leona Williams; Betsy Bain; Fred Bondi (8:20).

STAFF: Sara LeTourneau, Director of Personnel & Labor Relations.

OTHERS: Deputy Police Chief Mark Palmer; Hal Alvord, Director of Public Works; Councilman Kevin Poruban; Mayor Knopp.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 p.m. by the Chairman.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 22, 2004

** MRS. BAIN MOVED TO TABLE TO THE NEXT MEETING.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PROPOSED RECLASSIFICATION OF NASA POSITION OF FISCAL MANAGER/POLICE DEPARTMENT

Deputy Chief Palmer reviewed various changes to the Table of Organization of the police department. There were questions about adding additional sergeants. Those changes had no effect on the request of Mr. Favano for an upgrade. At that time, patrol officers were assigned to desk duty. They increased the number of sergeants and placed them on the desk in order to put more patrol officers on the street. The request for reclassification of Mr. Favano occurred one year before this took place. At one point, they had four captains, all of whom were in administrative positions. When Capt. Suchy left in October 2002, the plan was not to replace that position but to take his duties and reassign them to Mr. Favano. This was done and it prompted the request for an upgrade. Deputy Chief Palmer pointed out that this reassignment saved significant dollars.

At 8:20 p.m., Mr. Bondi arrived at the meeting.

Deputy Chief Palmer said it does not make sense to assign sworn officers to jobs that can be assigned to civilians. The police bureau did file an MPP when this took place but the complaint was withdrawn during the negotiation process.

Mr. McQuaid asked when Mr. Favano actually started the administrative job; Deputy Chief Palmer said it was in the beginning of 2003. Mr. McQuaid said they should look at

whether this should be retroactive. Ms. LeTourneau said there is no authority for a claim for a retroactive reclassification prior to May 2003, when the request was made.

Mr. Bondi noted that Mr. Favano had originally been on the Ordinance List.

Mrs. Bain asked past practice in terms of retroactivity. Ms. LeTourneau said when a request for reclassification is supported by the documentation, it would be as of the date of the request.

Mr. Bondi asked if there was money in the budget. Ms. LeTourneau said it exists because of the money in the police department budget due to the savings incurred.

**** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO APPROVE THE RECLASSIFICATION OF THE NASA POSITION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, RETROACTIVE BACK TO MAY 29, 2003, THE DATE OF THE RECLASSIFICATION NOTICE.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE POSITIONS (NMEA GRADE 9)

**** MRS. BAIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE POSITIONS, NMEA GRADE 9.**

Mr. Alvord said one of the Mayor's goals has been to create this service center to provide more timely, accurate and comprehensive responses to residents with concerns, questions and complaints. Public Works found that they receive 300 calls per day. A key aspect of this service center is staffing. They want to bring this to the Council on November 9th. There will be three staff members: a customer service manager and two customer service representatives. The manager position was created pursuant to an agreement with AFSCME. The job description of the two customer service representatives insures that it is an accurate representation of the duties and responsibilities of these two people.

Mr. Bondi inquired about the salary. Mr. Alvord said it is an NMEA Grade 9 position, at \$31,236.

Mr. McQuaid said that Ms. Blair's name is not in the NMEA contract. Ms. LeTourneau said it is in an appendix, not in the agreement. She is named because of her critical role in the parking operation. Mr. Alvord said this has, unfortunately, been done in a number of City contracts, but it is not good practice. Going forward, Public Works will not do this.

Mrs. Bain said that the job description is generic to the position; Mr. Alvord agreed.

Mr. McQuaid asked what they have done up to this point in terms of handling phone calls. Ms. LeTourneau said every department is fielding calls. This is a city-wide position, not just for Public Works, even though it will be housed in Public Works. Ms.

Blair has been running the call center for the entire city in Public Works for approximately one month.

Mr. McQuaid said this is the customer service center they had discussed previously without much support, only in a different suit. Mr. Alvord said it now has meat on the bones. The concept has not changed but it has been fleshed out.

Mayor Knopp said that Ms. Blair takes Public Works calls. He receives 30 calls a day in his office, which he forwards to the proper people. The biggest complaint he receives is that there is terrible customer service in City Hall. There is no tracking or follow up. The end result will be to give them the management ability to find out how many calls come in and on which issues. This would be a big step forward.

Mr. Alvord said that the IT Committee gave its approval today. Funding issues go to the Board of Estimate & Taxation and it goes to the Public Works Committee on Monday night. Mayor Knopp said that the money for software was put into the Capital budget of the current fiscal year. Mr. Alvord said that amount is \$25,000. Ms. Blair's salary is in the \$61,000 range.

Mayor Knopp said that, under State law, they have the obligation to bargain on the parking privatization. This related to Ms. Blair's supervision to LAZ. They have made other management changes in Public Works allowing them to fund this without a special appropriation for the rest of the year. Mr. Alvord said that Ms. Blair's position is not new. Her position was eliminated on July 1st and she went into this position, at no increase. The two service representatives cost the City \$32,000 for the remaining fiscal year. He has that amount from the operations manager and wastewater system manager positions in accrued salaries for the remainder of 2004-05.

Mr. McQuaid asked about the responsibility of the people who have been answering these calls. Mr. Alvord said that the calls go to many people; it is a very inefficient way to do things. They don't know how many people receive no answer and give up. There are still going to be routine business calls that should not go through the customer service center. If they advertise this properly and change the phone book, the customer service center will make sure every call gets a response or an immediate answer.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (MR. MCQUAID).**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**** MR. BONDI WENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT ON SUCCESSOR CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND THE NORWALK MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (NMEA 2002-2006) AND APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT ON SUCCESSOR CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND THE NORWALK ASSISTANTS AND**

SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION (NASA 2003-2006).

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. and reconvened into Public Session at 9:20 p.m.

** MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE ABOVE-LISTED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

INFORMATION/POSSIBLE DISCUSSION OF UNFUNDED POSITIONS FROM 2002-2004

There was no discussion on this item.

OLD BUSINESS/AFFAIRS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS/AFFAIRS

PENSION PLAN
BENEFIT ADMINISTRATION
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

These items were not discussed.

ANY NEGOTIATION UPDATE

There was no update.

ADJOURNMENT

** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO ADJOURN.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services