

CITY OF NORWALK PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES

CITY OF NORWALK

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

APRIL 9, 2001

ATTENDANCE: Harold McCready, Chairman; Rick McQuaid; John Tobin; Charles Flynn; Bruce Kimmel; Joseph Mann.

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

OTHERS: Kevin Fitzgerald, Town Clerk; Laurel Lindstrom.

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by the Chairman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 11, 2001

**** MR. TOBIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH 2 ABSTENTIONS (MR. MANN, MR. MCQUAID).**

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL: PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS, PROPOSED ORDINANCE LIST SALARIES

**** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE LIST.**

The Chairman said that the 3% increase proposed for everyone but the Finance Director is a cost of living increase rather than a merit increase. Perhaps the Ordinance List should allow cost of living increases to be approved by department heads. Merit raises should come before this Committee.

Mr. Tobin asked about the Town Clerk and Registrar of Voters positions. Ms. Oley said that the Registrar received a salary increase effective November 2000. The Town Clerk's position has a 3% increase that will take place this November. The Council declined to vote for an increase taking effect in 2001 for the Registrars. The Council can vote for an increase that takes effect in 2002. If they vote for an increase for the Registrars, it can only take place in 2002. The Council has voted in an increase for the Town Clerk with no increase in 2002. They cannot vote for an increase after the election. They can, however, vote now for an increase in 2002.

Mr. Kimmel said he was not comfortable with the idea of increasing salaries for friends. Mr. Flynn should recuse himself from these discussions. Mr. Flynn said they had voted last year for 3% increases for ordinance list employees, and if they continue to do so, they should do the same for the Town Clerk and the Registrars. Mr. McQuaid said it was not fair to attack Mr. Flynn; they don't know if Mr. Fitzgerald will even be running again. Anyone could be in that position next year. They should focus on the position, not the person.

The Chairman said they should take no action on these positions. Mr. McQuaid said if they did that, these positions would only receive a 1.5% increase for a two-year period. The Chairman said that a 3% increase is not mandatory.

Mr. Kimmel said he agreed this should be discussed as a position. This position is underpaid. He said he had no problem with increasing the salaries of the Town Clerk but he did have a problem with increasing the salaries of the Registrars.

Mr. Tobin said people run for these positions and they know the salaries. Mr. Mann and the Chairman said they agreed with Mr. Tobin.

Mr. McQuaid said that 1.5% increases are a slap in the face.

The Chairman said that in 2002, the Town Clerk's position will not be included for an increase. In the following year it would be appropriate to grant a 6% increase.

Mr. Kimmel said people have to be able to afford to run for office, and they have to be able to get the quality of people they want. Mr. Mann said when they begin to have a problem in terms of quality and no one runs, they will then have to fix the problem.

**** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCREASE THE TOWN CLERK'S SALARY FOR THE YEAR 2002 BY 3%.**

Mr. Kimmel said he would support the motion. This is an important department and they need really competent people to run for that office.

**** MOTION TO AMEND PASSED WITH 3 VOTES IN FAVOR (MR. MCQUAID, MR. KIMMEL, MR. FLYNN), ONE VOTE IN**

OPPOSITION (MR. MANN) AND ONE ABSTENTION (MR. TOBIN).

Mr. Kimmel asked why 5% was recommended for the Finance Director's position and discussion ensued on performance evaluations, which Mr. Mann characterized as "a joke".

**** MR. TOBIN MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO DECREASE THE FINANCE DIRECTOR'S INCREASE FROM 5% TO 3%.**

The Chairman said he was pleased with the 5% increase recommended for the Finance Director. That job is handled to perfection.

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

Mr. McQuaid brought up the idea of a pension for the Corporation Counsel instead of an increase. Mr. Mann, the Chairman and Mr. Kimmel said they were opposed.

**** MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED, PASSED WITH ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (MR. MANN).**

The Chairman said they have always had a public hearing on the Ordinance List, but he did not know why it was necessary. Ms. Oley said there has to be a public hearing because this is an ordinance.

There will be a public hearing at the next Personnel Committee meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. McQuaid, noting that the Fire Chief does not have a contract, asked that this be on the next agenda.

Mr. Tobin inquired about the status of hiring an Environmental Officer. Ms. Oley said they are assembling a search committee. They intend to fill this position as soon as possible.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman had no additional comments.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco

Telesco Secretarial Services

