

TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES – Gisborne Conference Room, 8:00 A.M.

Friday, January 23, 2009

Committee: Leslie Tarkington, Chairman
Nancy Barton, Michael Mason and William Kelly

Attendants: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Maureen Kast, Director of Human Resources; Peter Tesei, First Selectman; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Al Cava, Director of Labor Relations; Gina Williams, BOE - Assistant Director HR; John Crary, Town Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 A.M.

1. Approval of Human Resources Committee Minutes:

December 10, 2008 Meeting Minutes:

On a motion by Ms. Barton, seconded by Mr. Mason, the Committee voted 3 to 0 (Mr. Kelly absent) to approve the December 10, 2008 Minutes.

Agenda items were taken out of listed order for discussion to accommodate Mr. Gieger's and Mr. Cava's presence.

5. Discussion of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Employees

Mr. Gieger presented the Part Time Employees Report for the six month period of July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008. It was prepared using two week payroll numbers. The Town budgets approximately eleven million dollars a year for temporary employees, which include part-time and seasonal employees. This report enables departments to track their budgets and number of employees, as well as FTE's.

Ms. Tarkington noted the discrepancy between the total number of employees and the number of FTEs. A discussion followed with Ms. Kast explaining that Nathaniel Witherell employees work a 40 hour work week, while Town employees work a 35. Mr. Gieger said that he had calculated Nathaniel Witherell employees on a 35 hour work week for consistency in this report. Ms. Tarkington asked for clarification from Al Cava regarding this issue for next month's HR Committee Meeting.

Mr. Gieger then described the list provided to the Committee of the Top 120 Wage Earners 2008 Calendar Year. The Top 100 had been published earlier in the Greenwich Citizen newspaper. He noted that some Police Department and nurses entries included overtime dollars. A request was made to Mr. Gieger as to what percentages were BOE and Town entries and the addition of an extra column indicating employee departments, which would be helpful to the Committee.

2. Discussion of Amended M/C Employee Pay Plan

Ms. Tarkington expressed the Committee's appreciation for the cooperation of Nancy Weissler, Chairman, Ellen Flanagan, Director HR and Gina Williams, and Betty Sternberg, Commissioner BOE, in the preparation of the M/C Employee Pay Plan.

Ms. Kast reported that the Hay Group will now work with focus groups on the existing Performance Management System to upgrade and revise it to meet the Town's needs. An in-house team of four people to be trained as future trainers is being selected to work with the Hay Group for the next three months. The Hay Group will arrange training for appointing authorities and each M/C employee. The success of this plan in the next two years is dependent on the trainers. She will contact the IT Department to place the training materials, when available, on the Town's website for easy access. Thanks were acknowledged to the First Selectman's Office and John Crary for their support and the funding of almost 95% of this next step. It was agreed that the Town must move ahead with this pay plan regardless of what the economy will bring in the future.

Ms. Barton sent a draft revised Budget Resolution for the Amended M/C Employee Pay Plan to the HR and Law Departments, to be completed for BET approval in March 2009.

Ms. Kast discussed the First Selectman's position and salary. It was agreed that the First Selectman's salary should move to a competitive range for the November 2009 election to become effective January 1, 2010. The Committee requested Ms. Kast to provide her recommendation to the Committee.

4. Discussion of Employee Groups

Al Cava explained the Calendar 2008 Total Earnings By Employee Group chart. It reflects base salary, overtime, percentage of total earnings, number of positions and where each group currently stands in the bargaining agreement process. He then presented the General Wage Increases page which shows salary increases provided to Town union and non-union employees from 1990 to 2011.

The Employee Premium Cost Share by Bargaining Unit sheet reviewed by the Committee represents health care plans offered by the Town and employee participation. Cost cutting solutions were discussed including the possible increase of employee share of premium and higher co-pay prescription drug plans. Ms. Kast detailed the employee benefits of the Health Savings Plan such as lower premium, lower bi-weekly rate and Town funding of most of the deductible. She is working with BET member Larry Simon on this, which could save the Town substantial money. Ms. Kast discussed the higher medical budget the Town faces due to the State of Connecticut's new regulation regarding coverage of employee dependents over the age of 21, living within the State, which the Town must now offer through their parent's health plan.

Mr. Cava shared The Retired Employees Health Insurance Chart which represents 95% of OPEB expense. The chart shows credits given to retirees towards the cost of health care through the Town. Also the GMEA and Teamsters bargaining is currently ongoing.

3. Discussion of Training and Policy Manual

Ms. Kast informed the Committee that the Training and Policy Procedure Manual has been updated approximately 20%, with help from the Law Department over the past 2 to 3 years. A focus group is needed to review the remainder to make sure it is up to date, and legally sufficient. Funds for this focus group are in the HR Budget.

6. Discussion of HR Reports

Mr. Tesei addressed the Committee stating that the Town's Operating Budget needs \$4.960 million further budget reductions. An elimination of seventy positions Town wide would help achieve this. Currently the Town has reduced six positions and another fifteen is expected to be reduced due to attrition (Vacancy Report). Twenty five positions will come from BOE, as a result of the decline in enrollment and a change to the teacher to student ratio to 10:2. Another nine positions are in the process of being reviewed with departments. Wage freeze and wage concessions have also been reviewed but usually only help for one year. Outsourcing will be reviewed for maintenance services that will result in lower costs for the Town.

Mr. Kelly discussed the impact of the Hay Group's work on the M/C Pay Plan as opposed to these eliminations or freezes, and the challenge of maintaining credibility.

Mr. Tesei stated that part time payroll will be reviewed prior to the elimination of any full time positions. The Committee also suggested a review of current Town services for further reductions while attempting to maintain flat services for next year, and reduce head count. Mr. Crary will meet with departments to discuss the impact on services that reductions may cause. Ms. Barton requested from Mr. Crary a reconciliation of the head count of Town employees from the end of last fiscal year to the end of this fiscal year for the February HR Committee Meeting. It was noted by Mr. Mynarski that these reductions should be removed from payroll promptly to reduce additional Town expenses for sick days, vacation days and benefits.

Mr. Tesei expressed that employee reductions come down to how the Town's service levels will be impacted. The use of job cross-training and the sharing of duties have to be pursued. At this time continued communication with the HR Committee is needed.

7. Discussion of BOE Shared Services – not discussed

Upon a motion by Ms. Barton, seconded by Mr. Mason, the Committee voted 3 to 0 (Mr. Kelly absent) to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 A.M.

Leslie L. Tarkington, HR Committee Chairman

Elaine JV Brown, Recording Secretary