

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

MINUTES – Gisborne Meeting Room - 8:00 A.M.

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

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

Attendants: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; John Crary, Town Administrator;
Roland Geiger, Budget Director, Stephen Walko, BET Chairman;
Samuel Deibler, Director, Commission on Aging;

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 A.M.

1. Approval of Human Resources Committee Meeting Minutes of June 10, 2009

The Committee deferred approval of the June 10, 2009 Minutes to the September 16, 2009 BET HR Committee Meeting.

2. Employment Actions Subject to Budget Resolution – Senior Center Reorganization

Mr. Crary stated that at this time there is no action item before the Committee as Mr. Cava is currently in negotiations with the teamsters on the Senior Center food services.

Mr. Crary explained that Mr. Deibler, Ms. Helmrich and he met last fall to discuss the reorganization. It consisted of two parts: the first, programming had three part-time people, of which two were laid off last fiscal year. The Senior Center moved from part-time people providing programs to seniors, to outside instructors and programmers providing a service such as yoga, chess, or computer training. The Senior Center expects the result to be a richer program for seniors with a net savings of approximately \$19,000. Mr. Deibler continued that the original intent was not to trade 3 part-time coordinators for a full-time coordinator but to replace a full-time cook with a full-time coordinator, who would be responsible for the new instructors. Mr. Deibler said that one of the part-time employees laid off in the last fiscal year is covering the program coordinator responsibilities for the summer. He is still waiting for the Morrison Senior Dining proposal to provide food services for the Senior Center.

A discussion followed regarding the cost of employees FICA, retirement, and other benefits and the impact on the budget. Mr. Mason expressed concern over the value of lay offs and would like to quantify the benefits. Mr. Mynaski shared that currently the TOG is running fifty days late receiving unemployment information from the State. The Committee requested that a model be developed to examine the trade off between types of employees' compensation and benefits.

The Committee deferred the discussion of the Senior Center staffing until the next Committee meeting and requested that when the additional information is received that the request be submitted to Mr. Geiger for the Committee's review.

3. Discussion of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Employees

The Committee reviewed the Unemployment Report prepared for the discussion of the FTE Worksheet costs of part-time, seasonal, and temporary staffing. Mr. Kelly initiated a discussion concerning unemployment costs. He questioned whether there are abuses of unemployment compensation, and if the Town is pro-active contesting these filings.

Mr. Walko explained to the Committee some of the unemployment laws regarding eligibility after Mr. Mason stated some possible abuses. Mr. Gieger said that the HR Department uses Consultech to contest the filings. Mr. Walko questioned whether the BET Audit Committee reviews this topic. Ms. Tarkington recommended that Ms. Kast, Director HR report back on unemployment issues such as how the TOG contests a filing, and its success ratio. Mr. Kelly stated that the Committee should question the BOE process also. Mr. Walko questioned the laws regarding seasonal employees, such as life guards. Ms. Tarkington agreed to contact Ms. Kast to work with Ms. Iannuccilli, Assistant Director of HR, and Ms. Williams, Assistant Director of BOE HR to determine the process that is used by the BOE to contest filings.

Ms. Tarkington said that she had been approached by Mr. Norton, Chairman of the BET Audit Committee, for information the HR Committee concerning the Fire Department health insurance, received at the April 2009 HR Committee Meeting. She continued that at that time the Committee had thought the amounts were small and did not need further review. She will forward that paperwork to Mr. Norton.

4. Update on Early Retirement Plan

Mr. Walko stated that the BET is the only body capable of looking at the TOO across all appointing authorities. It is the BET's role to look at how the Town operates going forward with the TOO and filling positions. By Charter, if the appointing authority has money in the budget they can fill positions created by early retirement program legally but that is not the issue. The problem with that process is that it will cost the Town enormously over the long haul. Those who remain Town residents will be paying dearly for this program unless either positions remain vacant for periods of time or they are taken off the TOO.

As a result of that Mr. Walko has asked the Comptroller together with the Budget Director to draft a letter to the full BET to discuss with their respective caucuses prior to the BET meeting on July 20, 2009. The letter would go out to all appointing authorities advising that the BET would like to have a discussion on filling positions before they are actually filled. The BET can not mandate or direct it can only ask that they have this discussion with the Board.

Mr. Crary said that Mr. Tesei is also sending a letter to all the appointing authorities reiterating the TOG financial situation going forward this year and next and the plan to make the budget work. He said the letter has some money saving steps and a goal of five percent savings on non-salary items. He said that the Town wants to continue what was started in the last fiscal year.

It was noted by Mr. Kelly that during this process the BET HR Committee may have to meet more than once per month to address this issue. Mr. Walko concluded by saying that the BET must make this Early Retirement Program work.

A discussion followed concerning possible openings due to the retirement program in the Town Clerk's and the Tax Collector's Offices. Mr. Crary stated that they do not have control over filling positions in either department, but that he will discuss it with them.

Maintenance of Town service levels was discussed. Mr. Crary noted that a different staffing model is needed and that usually Mr. Lalli, Special Projects Manager, conducts these reviews.

Mr. Gieger explained a chart reflecting the first set of employees accepting the early retirement option. He noted that with the 52 employees accepting there is a possible savings of \$3,000,000 in salary and \$1,000,000 in benefits, as long as all 52 positions are not filled in the next six months.

Mr. Crary said that attention has to be paid to retirement and health insurance costs in the future years. Mr. Mynarski added that sick and vacation payout costs are in this fiscal year. Mr. Gieger stated that he will have sick, vacation and health care elections paid out to retirees for the September meeting. Mr. Mynarski stated that the Vacancy Report will become very important in the future.

5. Discussion of M/C 401 (K) Plan

Since Ms. Kast was absent from the meeting, this discussion was deferred.

6. Discussion of HR Reports

A brief view of the Vacancy Report followed. Mr. Mason questioned the Police Department reorganization concerning the current lawsuit. Ms. Tarkington stated that it should come to the HR Committee since it will involve reclassification and that the position classifications will need to be reviewed by the HR Director and at her direction if needed, the Hay Group. The Committee discussed the Police Chief attending the October meeting for discussion.

The updated Layoff Report of full-time and part-time was reviewed. Mr. Mason asked for the Unemployment Report as often as possible.

Upon a motion by Mr. Kelly seconded by Ms Barton, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 A.M.

Elaine JV Brown, Recording Secretary

Leslie L. Tarkington, HR Committee Chairman