

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

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

Monday, August 10, 2009

- Committee: Leslie Tarkington, Chairman
Nancy Barton, Michael Mason, William Kelly
- Other: Stephen G. Walko, BET Chairman; Robert S. Stone, BET Vice Chairman; Laurence B. Simon, BET. Peter Tesei, First Selectman. Nancy Weissler, Chairman, Board of Education; Stephen Francis, Vice Chairman, Board of Social Services; Lori Jackson, Chairman, Commission on Aging.
- Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Maureen Kast, Director, Human Resources; John Crary, Town Administrator; Carmella Budkins, Town Clerk; Diane Fox, Director, Planning and Zoning, Town Planner; Gina Williams, Assistant Director, BOE Human Resources; Susan Wallerstein, Assistant Superintendent, BOE Business Services; Dr. Sidney Freund, Superintendent, BOE; Adina Goldstein, Deputy Commissioner, Social Services; Samuel Deibler, Director, Commission on Aging; Barbara Ormerod-Glynn, Deputy Director, Greenwich Library.

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 A.M.

Discussion - Retirement Incentive Program Memorandum - July 23, 2009

Ms. Tarkington began the meeting by reviewing BET Chairman, Stephen Walko's, memorandum dated July 23, 2009 regarding the Early Retirement Incentive Program, the meeting's Agenda, and the review process. The Committee discussed the benefits and costs of the program and the goals to achieve.

Mr. Mynarski reviewed the *Retiree, Layoff Summary and Reduction in TO* handout prepared by Roland Gieger. The total annual compensation (salary and benefit) cost of the 46 retirees is \$3,922,942. If these positions were not filled this would be the Town's savings, less the accelerated payment (cost) of vacation and sick payouts of \$786,869. The present value of the long-term pension and healthcare cost of the Early Retirement Incentive is \$1,575,269. Mr. Mynarski stated that the sick and vacation payouts line item in fixed charges totals \$618,000 and the Town will have to spend another \$300,000 for additional retirees who are not part of the Early Retirement Program, resulting in a shortage of about \$400,000.

A discussion covering amortization of the healthcare numbers continued with Mr. Mynarski stating that the numbers were calculated using actuaries' set amortization tables, OPEB is 30 years, and the pension is 25 years. Ms. Kast noted that not all of the 46 retirees are entitled to extra pension benefits.

Mr. Mynarski mentioned two more savings points: lower salaries for replacement positions, and new active employees going into the defined contribution plan, rather than the defined benefit plan.

Mr. Mason expressed his concerns regarding the budgeted fixed charges and the Retirement Incentive Program's sick and vacation payouts that may be a negative cost to the Town. Members discussed whether the departments should absorb these liabilities or which accounts those expenses should be charged to. Mr. Mason also emphasized that if all the positions are filled that would defeat the initial reasoning for the retiree program.

As a specific example of the costs of the retirement program and replacing personnel, Mr. Mynarski and Ms. Kast discussed the current position replacement for an Assistant Tax Collector and the Tax Collector department's liabilities for vacation and sick payouts, as well as the cost of the retiree who returned on a part-time basis.

Ms. Tarkington expressed the BET Human Resources Committee's appreciation for Mr. Gieger's hard work and research addressing the Retirement Incentive Program issues.

Board of Education:

Nancy Weissler, Susan Wallerstein, Dr. Sidney Freund

Ms. Wallerstein noted that the BOE pays the vacation and sick pay expenses for certified and non-certified employees. Thirteen employees opted for the retiree program, of these, 4 positions were permanently eliminated. An additional 4 may retire this fall.

Since December, the BOE has eliminated 5 part time and 3 full time positions, while reducing 6 positions from 12 months to 11 months. Ms. Wallerstein noted that the BOE is working on the 2010-2011 Budget to determine where more reductions can occur. She circulated a one page handout which summarized the information.

Dr. Freund stated that staffing for the school year will be finalized by August 15, except those employees at the central office.

Office of the First Selectman:

Peter Tesei, John Crary

Mr. Tesei said that a considerable amount of work has been done by the First Selectman and Mr. Crary reviewing departments for head count reductions, job sharing, use of part time workers, cross training and operational efficiency while maintaining service levels. Mr. Tesei stated that for departments that report to the First Selectman, he should have discretion as to whether or not the position should be filled. Mr. Tesei continued that having meetings like this HR Committee meeting is a good means to focus on the ultimate goal.

Currently there are 15 position openings under the Office of the First Selectman. These are composed of positions in Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and the Executive Assistant to the First Selectman. Currently Mr. Tesei is in discussions relating to the outsourcing of positions in trees and park gardeners while maintaining services. Mr. Tesei said he has spoken with Ms. Siebert relating to openings in Engineering.

Mr. Tesei voiced his support for the replacement of the Executive Assistant position in the First Selectman's office. He also stated that he has asked the departments to review their costs and revenues.

Mr. Tesei discussed his support for replacing the opening in Administrative Services. He has also searched outside for volunteer greeters at the front desk for extra support there.

Ms. Barton questioned how many of the 15 openings are expected to be filled. Mr. Crary responded that by the beginning of October they should have a better idea, but because of the current arbitration with park gardeners and trees concerning outsourcing, it may be later than October.

Mr. Tesei expressed the importance of transferring this information to the public if services are eliminated or a reduction in service levels is anticipated.

A discussion regarding the Assistant Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions followed. Mr. Mason expressed his concern again for the fixed charges. Mr. Tesei recommended that the departments should know the costs of this obligation and have them look internally for the funds, that numbers have to be pulled together and laid out for each department, especially larger departments like Parks and Recreation and Public Works. Mr. Mason agreed that the appointing authorities should realize the financial responsibilities and impact.

Ms. Tarkington requested updates on the 15 openings for review at the BET HR Meeting on September 16. Mr. Tesei said that he would return in September with the number of positions that need to be filled and will request department heads to also attend the meeting.

Mr. Walko addressed the fixed charges policy, which should be a discussion topic for the BET and will be brought up at the September BET meeting.

**Town Clerk:
Carmella Budkins**

Ms. Budkins expressed her support for filling the Assistant Town Clerk position. Last February one position was eliminated in Vital Statistics and no part time employees have been added. Ms. Budkins stated that it is imperative to fill this position.

**Land Use Departments/Planning and Zoning:
Diane Fox**

As a result of the layoffs in February, the department lost one person due to a bump but the replacement has left the position, also. Land Use is interviewing to fill that opening.

Ms. Fox supports the replacement of the Land Use Technician. The position requires specialized working knowledge of AUTO CAD and GIS. Since it supports the Fire and Police Departments with all updated and new maps, it is an essential element within the department. The position is also responsible for assigning official and new addresses.

Ms. Tarkington questioned whether P&Z can absorb the early retirement costs. Ms. Fox said she will reply to the HR Committee after reviewing this issue.

**Social Services:
Adina Goldstein, Stephen Francis**

Ms. Goldstein read a memorandum to the BET HR Committee that Dr. Anyikwa, Commissioner, Social Services, had prepared. The memo stated that 2 full time homemakers will be retiring and will be replaced with 2 part time positions. A detailed explanation of the exact dollar savings was stated with a resulting cost savings of approximately \$20,000, with no medical or pension costs. Ms. Barton questioned the possibility of outsourcing, but Mr. Cray stated that the union negotiations can not be pursued for at least a year.

Mr. Mason praised the contents of the mathematical presentation and asked for it to be sent to the HR Committee members.

Summary:

A brief discussion followed regarding the Guidelines for Evaluation of Replacements form. Ms. Barton will work with Mr. Gieger to create a cover sheet for each position, stating the economics as a tracking device in relation to the openings.

Ms. Barton said that the Town should look at both this year's and next year's savings. Ms. Kast stated her concern over departments being responsible for their fixed charges. Mr. Mynarski stated that if BET sets a policy Finance can implement it through journal entries if necessary. Ms. Kast said that these positions are being back filled with significantly lower salaries creating a savings. Mr. Mason noted that there will be an increase in medical costs in the future.

Mr. Mason said that the underlining message from Mr. Tesei's office is the same list of services with fewer people and lower cost. Mr. Cray said there will be an impact on services.

Upon a motion by Mr. Kelly seconded by Ms Barton, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 A.M.

Elaine JV Brown, Recording Secretary

Leslie L. Tarkington, HR Committee Chairman