

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AND SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2015, AT 7:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Personnel Committee Chairman Thomas Ruocco; Committee Members Robert J. Oris and Peter Talbot. Council Members - Sylvia Nichols

Absent: Tim Slocum, David Schrumm, Patti Flynn-Harris, Liz Linehan, James Sima

Staff: Town Manager Michael A. Milone; Personnel Director Louis Zullo

**1. ROLL CALL**

The clerk called the roll. A quorum of the Personnel Committee was determined to be present.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

**3. NON-UNION/LIBRARY NON-UNION PAY PLANS**

Mr. Milone distributed information on the pay plan FY 2010-2015, showing what has happened with the non-union group minimum/maximum pay increases compared to the Town unions.

Page 2 - outlines the FY 2014-2015 approved exempt employees pay schedule and proposed 2015-2016 exempt employees pay schedule for job classifications E-5 to E-1, and N-4 to N-1. The proposed 2015-2016 increase is set at 2.5% in the minimum/mid/and maximum pay ranges, which is the same increase for the union employees.

Page 3 - outlines the FY 2014-2015 approved plan and FY 2015-2016 proposed Library Non-Union Pay Plan for L-1 to L-7 employees.

Page 4 - defines the non-union positions (exempt) E-5 to E-1.

Page 5 - defines the non-union positions (non-exempt) N-4 to N-1.

Mr. Milone explained the reason for the non-union request of 2.5% increase, stating that this pay plan does not go up each year with a new contract year. The Council makes this decision on an annual basis. He requests this increase so there is no disparity between the two plans, there is equalization, and people who reach the top of the pay plan are still entitled to a salary adjustment. Without the increase in the pay plan, he cannot give warranted salary adjustments. The non-union group receives salary increases based on performance evaluation from department heads and the Town Manager. Union employees have automatic raises, and receive evaluations to understand whether they are meeting a satisfactory review. Mr. Milone stated the pay plan is important for the ability to reward employees based on their evaluation.

**I. Non-Union Pay Plan - page 1.**

2010 - No change; 2011 - No change; 2012 - Salary study was conducted to have a basis for salary comparisons in like positions in comparable towns.

Mr. Zullo commented on the results of the survey of 46 chosen positions, using responses from 13 cities or towns, and 30 of the 46 positions were compared. The salary study used May 2011 data (column #4 on page 1), and the percentages have been used as the baseline going forward.

In 2012 the Council agreed that pay ranges needed to be narrowed, minimums moved up, pay ranges were shortened and easier to work with. In a few cases the maximum was increased per the report.

In 2013, 2014, and 2015, the percentage changes have been consistent across all the pay classifications, at 2.25%, 2.3%, 2.3%. The six year comparison increase (union/non-union) shows non-union at 6.85% to 10.55%, and Town unions at 13.25% to 15.25%. The request and recommendation is to increase the non-union pay plan by 2.5%.

Mr. Milone noted that not everyone will receive the 2.5% raise; some will get more; some will get less; and it is based on performance evaluation.

The Council was informed by Mr. Milone that last year a Quinnipiac Math Professor took the pay plan information and equalized it based on a form he developed. It was made clear and sensible, making the process of description of raises easier because it was as fair and equitable as it could be. The amount of a raise depends on the evaluation and scores, and how much money is available for salary adjustments. There is a pool of money for non-union employees, across all job classifications, and the total of the raises should not be more than 2.5%. On an individual basis, someone could get 0% or 4%, but the total should not be more than 2.5%.

July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 is the last year of the union contracts. Percentage increases were 2.3%, except for the Police Union at 2.75%.

Performance Evaluations - Mr. Zullo explained that the employee goals and objectives are set for one year; employees do a self evaluation; they are then evaluated by the department head and Town Manager.

On page 4, Mr. Zullo pointed out the positions which are close to 10% of maximum - Finance Director, Personnel Director, Library Director, Parks and Recreation Director, Economic Development Coordinator, Supt. Waste Water Treatment Plant, Collector of Revenue, Deputy Dir. Parks and Recreation.

Succession Plan - Mr. Milone talked about the succession plan, citing the fact that there are many senior people close to retirement in about 5 years. The E-1 to E-5

employees do not receive overtime, and their retirement pay is based on their last 3 years of employment.

Mr. Ruocco stated he does not like the pay plan, and does not want to raise the minimum salaries each year.

In that regard, Mr. Zullo stated that the proposed plan increases the gap between minimum and maximum, and when hiring an "E" employee they are not hired at the minimum.

There have been problems in the past, and Mr. Milone noted that each year there is someone at the maximum. To simply increase that pay grade to cover the 2.5% increase results in a loss of integrity in the leadership. Another concern is bringing the union group and non-union group pay plan closer together, which is not healthy.

It was pointed out by Mr. Zullo that Fire Chief Casner sees the Deputy Fire Marshal pay getting closer to the Fire Marshal's salary.

Mr. Milone stated that the pool of money in the budget was for 2.5%. The Personnel Committee can vote to move the minimum and maximum levels by 2.5%, and can review the item again at the June 2nd meeting. The matter will be on the Council agenda of June 9th.

Mr. Oris talked about growth potential in a position, i.e. moving from E-1 to E-2.

It was explained by Mr. Zullo that E-5 is the highest level of management staff, and people do not move from job classification to job classification. The Deputy Police Chief moved from E-3 to E-4 due to the reorganization of the Police Department and increase in job responsibilities.

Committee Chairman Ruocco stated the pay plan will be on the agenda of the meeting of June 2nd for further review and discussion.

#### **4. TOWN MANAGER'S FY 14-15 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Mr. Milone submitted his proposed goals and objectives for review and discussion with the committee. He commented on changes made with a new format for the document.

Objectives: The objectives listed in Goal #1 are all new. The other objectives/initiatives are ones seen last year; and they are a continuation of things started last year and in progress.

Mr. Milone commented on the fact that he has a strong group of professionals with various disciplines, and he uses best practices of these various disciplines, with some incorporated into the goals and objectives. Other drivers are the changing service demands and needs of the Town, opportunities for enhancements, taking a project a little further (i.e. Mixville Dam project), the goals and objectives of the Town

departments, budget documents, discussions with Town Councilors, information and priorities which the Council identifies, and the public.

The goals have not changed, and Mr. Milone said they are standard for him, are revisited year after year, and they are the five things he has to do which cover the range of everything expected of him and staff. The goals are the same, and objectives change year to year.

**I. Preserve Financial Stability and Sustainability of Town Operations.**

Objectives: Mr. Milone commented on the mitigation of anticipated debt service spike in 2017 associated with the WWTP upgrade. There is \$6.1 million in the debt service reserve account. It is hoped that by the end of the year the Town will have an idea on the outcome of the \$7.2 million claim against the Dept. of Corrections. There are other things which might have to happen, beyond using the reserves, to keep the budget increases at a reasonable level.

Another priority was cited by Mr. Milone -- looking at automated trash collection. It was done with recyclables because of savings with automated truck pickup, lower tip fee, and opportunity for increased recycling. There has been an adjustment by residents to the automated recycling, and automated trash collection should be evaluated. The container costs would be about \$4,000 to \$5,000; there would be renegotiation of the hauler's contract; and it would take about 5 years for pay back on the cost of the containers.

Labor Negotiation Strategy - all five bargaining units are up for negotiation at the end of 2015. There must be a meeting with the Personnel Committee, review of standard offering across the board, Town Council decision on what is and is not acceptable. Information is taken from each bargaining union; the Council is shown the impact of the gross increase, pension increase, health benefits increase, and percentages, i.e. 2% to 2.5% to 3%.

Mr. Zullo will prepare a packet for December 2015 submission to the Council on the negotiations/meetings/proposals.

Dept. of Corrections hearing is scheduled for September; there is an increase in economic development efforts; organization wide succession planning continues to sustain the Town; knowledge transfer is important; there is an information base through all of the technology, adopted policies, some issues to be dealt with. Streetlight acquisition has started and should be completed in December.

**II. Provide programs that support staff morale and enhance effectiveness  
To ensure the highest level of customer service.**

Objectives: Mr. Milone cited enhancement of software training due to the improvements in the technology infrastructure and hardware. Modules have been put together for staff training, which will take 3 months to complete.

Relative to employee engagement, Mr. Milone stated he is putting more effort into this objective. There is continuation of the wellness and safety programs, personal and professional enrichment programs, internal communication, and his ICMA credentialing.

Measurement Criteria - organization wide morale was added this year and it is a key criteria.

Mr. Talbot suggested the Town Manager consider an employee opinion survey as a tool to receive feedback from staff. It would be a baseline to judge whether the bar is being moved or not, and there could be a contest amongst departments for the most employee responses to the survey.

In response, Mr. Milone said the survey is a good idea, and there could be changes made based on employee feedback.

It was recommended by Mr. Oris that there be a public community survey to determine how people think the Town's job is being done by staff and Town Council. He prefers a community survey rather than an employee survey.

Mr. Milone talked about the 2002 Strategic Plan Town Survey, which was successful. He recommended another such survey about 5 years ago but the Council did not support having the Strategic Plan and Survey done again. He would be pleased if the Council wanted to embark on another Strategic Plan. Mr. Milone noted that an employee survey could be done quickly and without much cost. A Strategic Plan/Survey has a cost of about \$15,000, including a consultant/facilitator.

### **III. Improve Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Objectives - IT enhancements, website upgrade; CPD Canine unit by August; adoption of emergency communication plan; certification of CPD Dispatch staff/State mandate in 2018 for regionalization of emergency plan with Town planning for regionalization.

Continuing initiatives include fire service staff evaluation, modifications to incentive programs, succession plan development, new telephone system, upgrades to building surveillance/security systems, use of e-commerce for more Town departments, acquisition of the new CFD ladder truck.

Measurement Criteria - quality of service to the public, recognition of quality service by stakeholders, and other criteria were cited by Mr. Milone.

### **IV. Enhance Communication with all stakeholders to foster citizen awareness Of and involvement in Town Government, to maintain high level of Engagement and transparency.**

Objectives - Web site upgrade; conversion to new telephone system; upgrade of building surveillance and security system into one source.

With regard to federal funding for security, Mr. Milone advised that there is funding for schools but not town government buildings.

Continuing initiatives in this goal were technology for broadcasting and social media, strong press relations, outreach programs with elected and volunteer officials, and enhancement of Cheshire as the Bedding Plant Capital, and branding program. Mr. Milone reported that he and Mr. Sitko are working with the Beautification committee, and Cheshire Performing and Fine Arts, meeting with local growers for assistance with the program. There will be plantings from local growers in the Town Hall Lobby. Town staff is working with the Chamber of Commerce on recognition to local growers.

Mr. Milone cited "maintaining communication with Town Council Members" as an important initiative for him.

#### **V. Initiate, Advance or Complete Key Town Projects.**

Objectives: Mr. Milone reviewed projects with the Council, and commented on the West Main Street Sidewalk Project which awaits the 2nd STEAP \$500,000 grant, and has \$350,000 allocated in the budget. If the grant is received the project could be completed by the end of Summer 2015. Bridges and pump stations are projects being worked on, and will be discussed during the capital budget process. Other projects are the building assessment plan to evaluate Town buildings, solar panel installation at the landfill and various schools.

Advance or Complete: Pool Construction project; Linear Trail extension work begins June 1st; Plan of Conservation and Development updating is underway by the PZC; oversight of open space properties and policy for land acquisition; playground equipment replacement at Cheshire Park, MacNamara Park and Quinnipiac Park, and Mixville Dam and walkway project are all ongoing or completed.

Measurement Criteria: The criteria was briefly reviewed by Mr. Milone, and includes quality, progress and benefit of projects, actual cost vs. budgeted appropriation, and time schedule completion or milestones met.

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Mr. Oris.

MOVED that the Personnel Committee accepts the Town Manager's Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Year 2015-2016, with the recommendations and changes discussed with the Committee; and forward the Goals and Objectives to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Oris; seconded by Mr. Talbot.

MOVED to adjourn the Personnel Committee Meeting at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk