

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2014, AT 7:00 P.M. IN ROOM 207,
TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410.**

Present

Chairman Thomas Ruocco; Robert Oris and Peter Talbot.
Town Manager Michael A. Milone; Personnel Director Louis Zullo; Library Director Ramona Burkey; Police Chief Neil Dryfe.

1. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. AMENDMENT AND RECLASSIFICATION FOR THE ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR POSITION.

Town Manager Milone commented on the fact that the Cheshire Library has undergone an incredible transformation under the leadership of Ms. Burkey. She has brought a level of innovation, progressive management, and cutting edge initiatives that put the Cheshire Library at the forefront of any library in the State of Connecticut. Everything has been done economically and creatively with minimal resources. Now that many changes have been made, Ms. Burkey wants to align the staff with the structure in place. This is what the Assistant Library Director position will do.

Ms. Burkey explained that the Assistant Library Director position was designed in 1977, with one person in mind, was a 20 hour per week position, was compensated at an administrative level, and it had a narrow job description for programming and publicity for adults. With the retirement of the person who had held the job since 1977, along with the many changes in operations at the Library, Ms. Burkey requested that the position be a true administrative position.

At the present time there are 33 full time and part time staff members; one-half of them are in the union; and this is double the staff since 1977. With the addition of the Cheshire Performing and Fine Arts (Artsplace) now under the Library administration, Ms. Burkey said changes to the Assistant Library Director position are needed. The current job description for the position was written in the 1990's and was part of the job classification study.

Proposed changes to Assistant Library Director position:

- Increase hours from 20 per week to 25 hours to help with administrative load, improve recruitment possibilities.
- Align the position with duties expected of other administrative positions; 3rd in command).

- The position would be in charge of Marketing and Communications, which would also include supervising Library technology staff members.

The committee was told by Ms. Burkey that the Library Clerk position is now vacant and will be eliminated from the Library. This results in an annual savings of \$5,460.

Mr. Zullo commented on the fact that in his 19 years working for the Town he never dealt with the Assistant Library Director in any administrative function, and the position was basically a programming position. Currently, the Library is open 61 hours a week; when the Director or Deputy Director are off site, a union member is in charge; an administrative person (non-union) should be in charge and present on site. This person would be the Assistant Library Director. Since 1977, the Library has three times the number of staff and overtime is only \$1,000 a year due to the good job of scheduling done by the Deputy Director.

Regarding the union staff member being in charge at times, Mr. Milone does not like this idea as there are personnel conflicts and issues in terms of over-seeing people in the same bargaining unit. This is not a good practice, and the benefit of the Assistant Library Director will be having a third administrative position at the Library. The existing job description for Assistant Library Director does not authorize the person to run the Library, and the person's hours could not be increased because she was not qualified for the administrative duties of the position.

Ms. Burkey stated that the Library must have technology people to handle and administer the technology at the Library, along with coordination and marketing of the facility. The new Assistant Library Director would be that person, and would be responsible as the web master, handle press releases, coordinate programs and rooms, handle communications and marketing aspects. The current position has been vacant since November; some programs have had to be cut back; and approval of the position as "administrative" would enhance the technology plan for the Library.

The committee was informed by Mr. Milone that the Library Director is now responsible for administration of CPFA and Artsplace. This change was made (from Parks and Rec Department) because of the better synergy for cultural functions, and Ms. Burkey's understanding of how to bring technology into cultural services. CPFA also needed assistance in this area.

Given the proposed changes for the Assistant Library Director position, Ms. Burkey said the person would be helping and involved with CPFA as part of the job duties. With benefits the position would have a cost of \$46,483, and the total Library salary savings would be about \$2,500.

Mr. Milone reported there is money in the budget to cover this position for this fiscal year. The library clerk position at \$5,460 is being eliminated. The Assistant Library Director job will be posted internally first, will be on the web site, and posted at outside

areas such as the Connecticut Library Association. He advised that union positions must be posted internally.

It was stated by Mr. Oris that he believes the Town should get the best person for the job, whether internal or external, and the posting should include both.

Ms. Burkey commented on there possibly being an internal candidate for the position, and noted that everyone would be interviewed.

Benefits were discussed, and the 25 hour a week employee pays 50% of premium share for medical benefits. For a single person on the PPO plan with cost of \$9,974.52, the annual cost would be shared at 50% or \$4,987.26 for the Town and employee. Family coverage premium at 50% shared by Town and employee would be \$11,250, and 25% premium cost would be \$17,000 to the employee.

Based on the costs to the Town for medical benefits, Mr. Ruocco recommended that the job be posted at 24 hours a week rather than 25 hours, as this would bring the medical benefits premium sharing to 75% employee and 25% Town.

In response, Ms. Burkey advised that this one hour would make a big difference in take home pay calculations for the person accepting the job. It also makes a big difference in recruiting for the position. The difference is about \$4.00 per hour.

For this position, Mr. Milone said we are talking about people with significant skills, a Masters Degree in Library Science, and two years of related administrative experience. By cutting hours and benefits here and there the Town loses good candidates.

Ms. Burkey commented on the one hour a week reduction which makes a big difference in terms of the 50% versus 25% employee premium for benefits.

It was noted by Mr. Ruocco that the hourly rate for the position is down, yet he knows the administrative staff works hard.

With regard to the 24 hours versus the 25 hours, Mr. Oris said the differential is between the premium payment for benefits, which equates to \$4.00 per hour, with an annual difference of \$5,600. The Library Clerk position is eliminated. The director will look for the best qualified candidate, internal or external. Mr. Oris believes the Council must look at the experts who know what they need for the operation of the Library, and he will support the request as recommended for the Assistant Library Director position.

According to Mr. Milone there will be external recruiting; internal people can still apply for the position; and the best candidate will be selected.

Mr. Talbot agreed to posting the position internally and externally.

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

MOVED that the Personnel Committee approves the amendments and reclassification of the Assistant Library Director position for the Cheshire Library; and approves of elimination of the position of the Library Clerk; and forwards this matter to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. POLICE DEPARTMENT REORGANIZATION.

Chief Dryfe distributed a packet of information (job descriptions, changes made in the department, organizational charts) to the committee for review and discussion.

The committee was informed by Mr. Milone that there was a lengthy and successful contract negotiation with the Police Department Union. Chief Dryfe wanted to reorganize the department, improve efficiencies, etc. but had to wait until after negotiations to do this. The Chief received Council approval to reorganize the department in order to save money, and now must give the Council the steps in place and associated costs.

Handout – page #1 is the Cheshire Police Department Organizational Chart as of January 2011. Chief Dryfe reviewed the supervisory and direct reporting system under this chart.

Page #6 – The current organizational reflects the order within the department (chain of command, job titles, supervision, reporting) and Chief Dryfe reviewed this information with the committee.

Last page – The new organizational chart reflects the changes which Chief Dryfe has made in the department (chain of command, job titles, supervision, reporting).

The total number of officers for the Police Department is 48, and there are 45 positions currently filled including 3 officers in the Police Academy. The new organizational chart keeps the same number of positions but changes titles. Under the new plan 4 supervisory positions (out of 16) are cut down to 12 people who will supervise 36 staff members. This results in labor cost reductions of about \$94,000.

Strategic Plan 2014

Chief Dryfe briefly reviewed the Police Department Strategic Plan for FY 2014 along with his cover letter of December 19th, with the committee. He explained that other departments which are the size of Cheshire do not have the type or organization now in place, and staff can be better utilized with the future development of the Town. The Strategic Plan (plan) will eliminate 4 supervisory positions; adds 4 police officer positions; with addition of more sworn staff.

The proposed outlet stores in Cheshire are planned within the next few years in the north end of Town. Chief Dryfe advised that the West Farms Mall pays the Town of Farmington the cost of 1.5 police officers, and hires police officers to patrol the mall site.

Mr. Milone completed a fiscal impact analysis of this development project 5 years ago and again this year. The independent consultant indicated Cheshire would need 4 or 5 more police officers when the outlet center opened. With the proposed reorganization from Chief Dryfe the addition of more officers cannot be justified, and the Chief is doing this reorganization without additional officers.

Mr. Oris questioned the age and experience of the Patrol Officers in the department.

There are senior officers in the Patrol Division, and Chief Dryfe reported this group has 12 to 16 years of experience, and 3 Traffic Officers have more than 10 years of experience. One officer just graduated from the Police Academy; 3 officers are now in the Academy; there is 1 new dispatcher; officers bid for shifts based on seniority; some officers on the midnight shift have 7 to 10 years experience.

Mr. Milone commented on the cultural changes which Chief Dryfe has made within the Department, and the fact that there are younger officers joining the department. The experienced officers are supervising the younger officers.

As a result of the reorganization, Mr. Ruocco noted there will be more police officers and supervisory officers on the streets.

According to Chief Dryfe the minimum staffing is 3 officers and there are never less than 3 officers on the street. With implementation of the reorganization the department will have a sergeant and 3 police officers on duty at all times. The goal is to have 9 patrol officers on each shift.

Mr. Oris stated that even with the minimum of 3 officers on the street, the police are very visible, and the police officers do a good job performing their duties.

Two Year Cost/Savings Analysis – Chief Dryfe explained the how the reorganization plan results in reduced cost and increased savings for FY 2014.

Reorganization Plan Cost/Savings Analysis FY 2014

Lieutenants (3 positions) – Payroll costs - \$79,730 each; total of \$239,190.
9% pay increase (through bargaining process) - \$86,906 each; total of \$260,718.
Increased yearly payroll costs of \$21,528; for remainder of 2014 projected cost is \$9,042.

Sergeants (7 positions) – Payroll costs - \$74,510 each; total of \$521,570.
4.2% pay increase (through bargaining process) - \$77639 each; total of \$543,473.

Increased yearly payroll costs of \$21,903; for remainder of 2014 projected cost is \$9,199.

The increased payroll cost of the proposed reorganization in Fiscal Year 2014 is projected to be \$18,241.

Proposed Fiscal Year 2014 payroll savings is \$66,880.

The net savings in FY 2014 (if reorganization is approved by the Council) is projected to be \$48,639.

When he was developing the FY 13-14 budget and looking at the retirement incentive, Mr. Milone cut the Police Department budget by \$88,000. He informed the committee that the \$48,639 is on top of the \$88,000 already factored in, so the actual savings is \$154,880.

FY 2015 Reorganization Plan Cost/Savings

Lieutenants (3): 2.75% contractual raise effective 7/1/14 (*without approval of 9% raise proposed under reorganization*) - \$81,922; total of \$245,766 for 3 positions..

Lieutenants (3) with 2.75% raise *and 9% raise* proposed under reorganization; \$89,295; total of \$267,885 for 3 positions.

Increased yearly payroll for FY 2015 – 3 Lieutenant positions is projected to be \$22,119.

Sergeants (7): 2.75% contractual raise effective 7/1/14 (*without approval of 4.2% raise proposed under reorganization*) - \$76,559; total of \$535,913.

Sergeants (7) with 2.75% raise *and 4.2% raise* proposed under reorganization- \$79,774; total of \$558,418 for 7 positions.

The net savings in FY 2015 with Council approval of the reorganization is projected to be \$94,957.

Projected Savings FY 2015

The anticipated savings assume the reorganization is approved and eliminates two (2) captain and two (2) lieutenant positions. The first year cost of a police officer is \$50,921. The cost of the vacant Captain and Lieutenant positions is \$343,265. The total first year cost for four (4) officers is \$203,684, and this is a savings of \$139,581.

Chief Dryfe explained that a Captain position works 35 hours; the 9% increase is only for three people; the average salary is \$87,694 or \$48.18 per hour. A Lieutenant works 40 hours a week; average salary is \$79,730 or \$38.33 per hour, and with the 9% increase the hourly rate would be \$41.78. Three Lieutenants are replacing Captains in the reorganization plan.

With impact bargaining, Mr. Zullo stated that the Chief has the right to bargain. The impact is the change in the job description and compensation and job responsibilities.

Mr. Milone explained that with the reorganization the overtime costs in the department will be reduced. Overtime is a moving target, and until the Police Department is fully staffed there will be more overtime. With full staffing there will be overtime savings. The Chief has eliminated double time overtime on Sundays.

The retirements in the Police Department have been accelerated by 12 to 18 months. This has given Chief Dryfe the opportunity to undertake the reorganization earlier than anticipated.

Chief Dryfe reported the contract provides an officer to accrue 150 sick days, and to get paid for any days over the 150 days. Six (6) of the seven (7) officers who retired were entitled to some amount of sick time buy back, totaling \$26,000. If all were still here, given their raises, next year the Town would be paying them \$27,000. The officers replacing the retirees will be new so they won't get this payment.

According to Mr. Milone the rationale for this sick day benefit came from Chief Merriam who feared officers at 150 days, without ability to accumulate more time, would start calling in sick. And, the only way to avoid this was to compensate them for the days over 150 day. It got to the point where the Town was paying 14 to 16 officers being paid a lot of money.

Regarding hiring the need to hire three (3) more officers, Chief Dryfe anticipates a fourth officer retiring. The next class at the Academy starts in April.

Mr. Milone wants to bring the Police Department reorganization plan to the full Town Council on January 28th. If approved, the Chief could begin implementation of the plan on February 1st, and begin alignment of the department as it should be aligned.

The issue of overtime was raised by Mr. Ruocco, who asked for a general idea of costs and savings.

In response, Mr. Milone will provide the Council with a good example of how overtime costs and savings will be affected by full staffing of the Police Department. However, it will take a year to get to this point, with many moving parts making it hard to predict.

Chief Dryfe reported that the budget projection is \$15,000 in patrol overtime, and he is asking for \$25,000 more in the next fiscal year. This will be a one year request. The department has three (3) officers in the Academy now; they graduate July 1st; they will receive three months of field training; they will be on the road October 1st; there are three more hires in April 2014. Chief Dryfe stated he has one certified officer for hire who will not require more training. The Town has three seats reserved in the April Academy class. There is one solid candidate ready to be hired in March to learn the desk and other duties before going to the Academy. The department also has other

potential retirements – 5 or 6 staff members who can buy the two years using their unused vacation time and get to the maximum.

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

MOVED that the Personnel Committee approves the Police Department Reorganization Plan and forwards it to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Before adjournment, Mr. Milone informed the committee that he will provide the Council with the overtime costs and savings report. He also noted that for a new police officer it is eleven (11) months from hire to their going on the road.

5. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk