

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2016 AT 6:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN
HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Personnel Committee Chairman Thomas Ruocco; Committee Members Sylvia Nichols and Peter Talbot. Council Members: Robert J. Oris, Chairman; Paul A. Bowman, Vice Chairman; Patti Flynn-Harris. Absent: Michael Ecke and Liz Linehan.

Staff: Town Manager Michael A. Milone; Police Chief Neil Dryfe; Registrars of Voters Tom Smith (D) and Susan Pappas (R).

Guest: Police Chief William Wright, Town of Wallingford CT.

1. ROLL CALL

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. REGISTRAR'S SALARIES

Ms. Pappas and Mr. Smith distributed information on the Registrar's salaries and adjustments, and their request for a 2.5% salary increase which is based on the percentage given to other Town employees.

A salary history for Registrar's showing salary, \$ and % increases from 2011 through 2016 was submitted to the Council.

2014 Current ROV salary - \$22,040.00; 0.25% increase = \$551; \$22,591.00 new salary.

2016 (proposed) - \$22,591.00 x 0.25% increase = \$564.77; \$23,155.77 new salary

Mr. Smith explained that Registrars receive a stipend for elections outside the normal elections, and noted that salaries have not changed since 2013-2014. Registrars work 18 hours a week which is insufficient to complete the work in election years, and they received a lump sum payment in 2009 for extra elections work. The stipend for 2015-2016 is to be \$550 per Registrar per special election.

The Registrars requested the Council reauthorize this stipend expense as a budget line item for the extra work required. The 2016-2017 budget included the line item without a stated amount to be paid.

Mr. Smith noted this is not an annual expense, but is only for extra work if and when required. The Registrars also requested a salary increase (2.5%) which they stated is the same as other Town staff. Their salary in 2014 was not increased, while there was an additional work load due to State mandates for Elections Departments. According to

Mr. Smith the Registrars are required to work full time for part-time pay; they do not participate in the benefits program or have other Town benefits.

It was pointed out by Ms. Pappas that she and Mr. Smith are required to live in Town, continue to pay higher taxes, and are vested in Cheshire. For the last two years, she stated the Registrars want compensation for 2015 at \$551 and 2016 at \$564.77 - which represents a 2.5% increase, similar to other employees. The Registrars are elected officials, on a two year cycle, and must meet with the Council to request salary increases at least 120 days prior to the next election.

Going forward, Ms. Pappas said the Registrars request a 2.5% compensation increase as follows: 2017, increase of \$578 - salary of \$23,733.77; 2018 -\$593.34 - salary of \$24,327.21.

Mr. Milone clarified that in the two years without a salary increase the Registrars were paid a lump sum built into their base salary. The back pay requests of \$551 and \$564.77 total \$1,115.77 lump sum payment.

Ms. Pappas stated this payment is a Council decision, but the Registrars are asking for \$1,115.77 as a lump sum to be built into the compensation base.

The issue of a one time payment for additional work (outside the salary) was raised by Mr. Talbot who asked for clarification.

It was explained by Ms. Pappas that this is payment for anything beyond the November election. It is paid to the Registrars for extra elections, i.e. primary election, special elections, referendum elections. The overtime for these elections was calculated by the Registrars, and it equals the stipend requested.

Mr. Smith summarized the ROV requests. 1) recoup 2015 and 2016 at 2.5% increase or \$1,115.77; 2) secure a 2.5% increase for 2017 and 2018, and one time payout for additional work based on extra elections; 3) payment for elections outside November, at payment of \$550 per special election.

Mr. Slocum commented on the need to have things memorialized and said the lump sum payments should be part of the salary base.

The Council was informed by Mr. Milone that there was never a request for Council action on the ROV salary. The last increase was 2012, and the resolution was to increase the base awards for one and two years. In August 2012 the Registrars received \$766 for the primary election, and the amount reverted back to the current \$450 for special elections. The \$450 was the last amount approved four years ago; it was increased to \$550 in the last budget; but cannot be appropriated without Council action. Two years ago the increases were 2.3%, total of \$1.025, but this was never passed by the Council.

With regard to the stipend as part of the regular payment to the Registrars, Mr. Slocum said this has been in the budget since 2009, and is part of the department operating budget.

Mr. Ruocco is okay with the stipend and the percentage increase going forward, but said he would not support the back pay for 2015 and 2016 as it is not necessary.

Mr. Oris stated he is fine with the back pay, the percentage increase equal to other Town employees, but hesitant to commit to 2.5% going forward. Registrars should get the same percentage as other employees.

It was clarified by Mr. Milone that the percentage increase was 2.3%, while the Registrars are using 2.5%.

By Town Charter, Ms. Pappas noted that the Council must decide on a Registrars salary two years out, 120 days before the November election.

Mr. Milone said the Council can still give the Registrars a lump sum payment after a decision on the compensation. When the budget was developed the 2017 salary adjustment was at 2.25%.

Stating she was okay with the back pay and stipend for special elections, Ms. Nichols was uncertain about a 2.5% increase. She would support a lesser increase equal to that of other Town employees.

Mr. Bowman is okay with items 1, 2, and 3 as stated, but questioned Mr. Smith's comment about 140 hours of overtime, and the large liability to the Town.

In response, Mr. Milone advised that as elected officials the Registrars are paid whether they work or not...and there is no exposure or liability to the Town for their overtime hours. This is also the same situation for the Town Clerk.

Mr. Talbot supports the back pay for the last two years, lump sum payout equal to 2.3% increase (\$506.92 and \$528.58 - \$1,025) plus \$450 stipend for 2016 extra election, which comes to a total of about \$1,500 to each Registrar.

2017 - based on 2.3% increase on a base salary of \$22,040.00, the increase is \$506.92; new salary of \$22,546.92.

2018 - 2.3% increase on a base salary of \$22,546.92, the increase is \$518.58; new salary of \$23,065.50.

The Council was informed by Mr. Milone that the Registrars were already paid the \$450 stipend, so the payback would be \$1,025.50. Per Council approve the stipend would be \$550 for special elections.

The calculations were summarized by Mr. Talbot. \$1,025.50 back pay; 2.3% salary increase for 2017 and 2018; and \$450 stipend for special elections.

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Ms. Nichols.

MOVED that the Personnel Committee approves the following compensation for the Registrars of Voters and forwards the item to the full Town Council for approval.

\$1,025.50 back pay; 2.3% salary increase for 2017 and 2018;
and \$450 stipend for special elections.

VOTE The motion passed 2-0; Nichols and Talbot in favor; Ruocco opposed.

The matter was moved to the full Town Council.

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Ms. Nichols.

MOVED that the Cheshire Town Council approves the following compensation for the Registrars of Voters.

\$1,025.50 back pay; 2.3% salary increase for 2017 and 2018;
and \$450 stipend for special elections.

VOTE The motion passed 6-1; Oris, Bowman, Flynn-Harris, Nichols, Slocum, Talbot in favor; Ruocco opposed.

4. WALLINGFORD/CHESHIRE POLICE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS

Cheshire Police Chief Dryfe and Wallingford Police Chief Wright were present to discuss this agenda item.

Mr. Milone informed the Council that this program is ready to go. He did not want to spend time on the agreement and bring it to the full Cheshire Town Council without the Wallingford Town Council approval, which is now in place. Mr. Milone apologized to the Council for the newspaper article earlier in the week which misrepresented critical points of the agreement, and for any problems caused. The Council was told by Mr. Milone that this is a great document and wonderful collaboration.

About five years ago, Mr. Milone noted there were management principles established that talked about innovation, passion, creativity, best practices, leadership...and worked to instill in staff the energy to continue to innovate and find better ways to do things. The status quo is regression, and this was made clear to everyone.

Mr. Milone said Chief Dryfe came to Cheshire with a plan and a mission and has moved this along. As resources shrink there is less we can do among ourselves, and a great opportunity is collaboration and partnerships with other communities. Some of these are in place and very successful, including the standard mutual aid agreement in place for many years for police and fire emergencies. Cheshire has been working on a

dispatch consolidation with Wallingford, North Haven and North Branford for over a year, and it is hoped there will be success with this.

The solid waste agreement created through CRRRA with Wallingford, North Haven, Meriden, Hamden and Cheshire has been successful. Mr. Milone said this is an inter-local agreement that has saved all the towns lots of money. Also, the WPCA developed an inter-local agreement with Southington and Meriden to bring down the price of methanol and other chemicals. It is now used as a buying consortium for chemicals. The stop/loss insurance agreement is similar to a consolidated and collaborative effort, and the Town has had purchasing consortiums for many years. The Council was told by Mr. Milone that Cheshire has a good working relationship with Wallingford, and in the CRRRA consortium the five towns worked well together.

Chief Dryfe and Chief Wright share a similar philosophy, are very progressive, saw great opportunity to continue to work together beyond the dispatcher agreement. Mr. Milone cited the Interlocal Agreements as the product of this work.

For a department the size of the Cheshire Police Department, Chief Dryfe stated Cheshire does not participate in any joint teams, and this is the exception. The working relationship between the Towns of Cheshire and Wallingford was cited by Chief Dryfe in the agreement submitted for Council review. He noted that many towns in the capital region participate in interlocal agreements, have many teams working together, and there are economies of scale and cost savings associated with a mutual aid agreement.

Chief Dryfe commented on having an Accident Reconstruction Team, the costly training for two weeks in Florida, and the interlocal agreement getting Cheshire into something routine for other departments. The central region Emergency Response Team is one part of what Cheshire and Wallingford are trying to do. He noted surrounding towns (i.e. Southington CT) are part of the capital regional agreements. Meriden and Waterbury are cities; they are more urban, more self contained; have more police officers; and operate in a different environment from Cheshire. Wallingford is a good partner for Cheshire; the towns have the same mind set, philosophy about customer service, are similar in demographic population; the towns have the same suburban community; the WPD has 70 officers and Cheshire has 48 officers.

Mutual Police Assistance Agreement (SWAT Team) - this combines the Wallingford and Cheshire emergency response teams. When he came to town, Chief Dryfe said CPD had 48 officers; 12 on the ERT. The normal standard training for ERT tactical team is two days a month, and this has been difficult to manage at CPD with scheduling and overtime and being short staffed.

Physical Fitness Standards for ERT - Chief Dryfe is uncertain if CPD has 12 qualified and capable candidates at all times to fill a complete team. Wallingford and Cheshire departments were short staffed and started training together - 8 officers from each department makes up a 16 member team. This is a huge manpower advantage; the teams have trained together for 18 months, and supervisors and officers work well

together. In an emergency, the Chief of the Town is responsible for the overall situation and retains control; the ERT would be called in and on-site for the situation; there is a team leader, at this time the team leader is a Lieutenant from the WPD. Without the towns having such a team, the State Police are called in and have control of the situation.

Under State law, local police departments have no authority to operate over a town line. Chief Dryfe noted some towns have cross agreements between police departments to operate and provide services.

Mutual Police Assistance Agreement - this agreement is specifically for the SWAT team operations and formation of the team.

Interlocal Agreement - this agreement is for routine type situations such as drug cases, drug investigations, traffic operations.

Chief Dryfe talked about "home ruling"...all police officers are certified by the State of Connecticut...but officers have no jurisdiction to operate over the town border. He informed the Council that assistance between Cheshire and Wallingford must be made by a request...i.e. a major storm in Wallingford with the Chief requesting assistance from the CPD. In his 5 1/2 years in Cheshire, Chief Dryfe has acted the CPD SWAT team only one time...it is a rare occurrence.

Regarding the mutual aid agreement, Chairman Oris asked about cross serving Cheshire and Wallingford, with the police officers having the same rights as a resident police officer within a town.

In reading the interlocal agreement, Chairman Oris referred to "A, 2 and 3" for clarification -- a municipality not electing to participate in an assistance request.

According to Chief Dryfe this cites a municipality having discretion to agree or not agree to any joint obligation request, and respectfully declining. He cited an example of Cheshire having an emergency storm situation, wires down, intersections closed, etc. and being unable to send police officers to assist with the similar Wallingford storm emergency situation.

Chief Wright stated these sections provide the ability to deny participation in good faith. He reported that Wallingford P.D. has not looked into an agreement with any other town, and said Wallingford is more aligned with a conservative manner of services, and the partnership with Cheshire is a natural one. Chief Wright commented on WPD's past assistance for a neighboring town with a SWAT operation, the uncomfortable situation, and it not being the way WPD did business. The WPD and the Chief are excited about this partnership.

Stating he has more questions to be answered, Mr. Oris needs further review of the agreements, with legal questions to be answered by the Town Attorney. He asked

Councilors if they wanted this matter referred to the June 14th meeting. Councilors asked that the matter be on the June 14th meeting agenda.

MOTION by Ms. Nichols; seconded by Mr. Talbot.

MOVED that the Interlocal Agreements between the Cheshire and Wallingford Police Departments be moved to the full Town Council meeting on June 14, 2016 for Council review, discussion and approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Talbot

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk.