

CITY OF WAUWATOSA

MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER
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EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, April 13, 2004
Council Chambers

PRESENT: Aids. Casey, Heins, Stepaniak – 3

EXCUSED: Aids. Jenkins, Kopischke

ALSO PRESENT: T. Wontorek City Admin.; B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty.; L. Nielsen, Sup. of Nurses

Ald. Casey as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

Reconfiguration of staffing plan for the health department

Ms. Nielsen said the health department is requesting to eliminate a vacant full-time nursing position and designating some of this funding for the following: 1) to provide additional hours for an existing part-time nurse and 2) create a part-time epidemiologist position. She said the health department is required to collect, compile, analyze and report data from the public health and environmental health division programs to the State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services Division of Public Health and to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Over the past eight years health department programming has expanded markedly. The reporting requirements have become more complex and a multidisciplinary approach would provide necessary public health capacity and improve efficiency.

Ms. Nielsen said the full-time position was intentionally left vacant between September and December to save money during the budget cutbacks and in order to re-evaluate the needs of the department. This resulted in an approximate savings of \$15,934 in 2003. As the position remains vacant, there is additional savings. The evaluation has identified the need to retain a certain number of nursing hours to maintain adequate staffing for programming and safe coverage. The evaluation also revealed a need to increase the department's epidemiologic capacity and surveillance. The Health Officer and Supervisor of Nurses need assistance to keep up with the demand and increasing complexity of the information required. An epidemiologist has the technical expertise to provide this assistance. This position would play a vital role in the required reporting of department program data and trending for a Level III health department. It will also strengthen the infrastructure of the department. She recommended the following: 1) eliminate the full-time nursing position; 2) increase the hours of the current part-time public health nurse to 0.865 FTE to assist in nursing coverage; and 3) create a new part-time epidemiologist position (0.5 FTE) to conduct epidemiological and biostatistical surveillance of multiple health department programs and assist in reporting requirements.

Ald. Stepaniak asked if there were any other requirements that need to be met to qualify for a Level III health department. Ms. Nielsen responded that they need a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a local laboratory that supports current & emergency threats and the department needs to finish a tattoo and body piercing ordinance.

Ald. Heins asked if a person can be found to fill the epidemiologist position part-time especially in light of this position requiring a masters degree. Ms. Nielsen replied that there may be parents who would want a part-time job or people who would work part-time doing university level research and part-time in the health department. With the emphasis on bio-terrorism, there are more people looking for this type of position. She added that the proposed salary of approximately \$22,000 would be the annual salary. Ald. Heins asked about benefits for the

position. Ms. Nielsen said the benefits question was tabled at this point so the person will receive the benefits offered to part-time positions. Mr. Wontorek said the part-time benefits would include Social Security, pension, and pro-rated vacation and sick time.

Moved by Ald. Heins, seconded by Ald. Stepaniak to recommend approval of the reconfigured staffing plan for the health department – 3

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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