

CITY OF WAUWATOSA

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EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, February 22, 2005
Council Chambers

PRESENT: Alds. Bruderle-Baran, Casey, Jenkins, Kopischke, Stepaniak – 5

ALSO PRESENT: T. Wontorek, City Admin.; B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty.; Chief D. Redman; W. Tarman-Ramcheck, Pub. Works Prog. Analyst

Ald. Jenkins as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Amendment to Section 2.58.021 of the municipal code pertaining to executive leave

Ms. Aldana distributed spreadsheets showing: 1) all exempt employees grade 10 and above, 2) exempt employees except certain police and fire positions, and 3) executive leave currently awarded. She said that executive leave was awarded in connection with the hiring process, but not offered in all cases by the previous City Administrator. She said she was not aware of the reason why the former City Administrator did not offer the executive leave in some cases.

Mr. Wontorek said that part of the discussion involves looking at how executive leave impacts on retention of employees. Should the policy be changed or is the policy fine the way it is and should the policy be considered on a case-by-case basis or offered in all cases. If the policy remains the way it is at present, this issue could be placed on file.

Ald. Kopischke said that if executive leave is offered to employees currently at grade 14, it would affect 8 individuals. It seems to be a worthwhile retention tool. Ms. Aldana gave the example of a candidate that was offered a position with the city, but turned it down because they had 4 weeks vacation at their current job and they would have had to wait 15 years to gain that back with the city.

Ald. Casey said he was more comfortable with the numbers of employees at grade 10. He said there needs to be a policy to reinforce for both hiring and retention.

Chief Redman said that if someone is brought in at an executive level and hired for background and experience, executive leave is something that needs to be considered.

Ald. Kopischke said it would be understandable for a candidate to want to retain their level of vacation from a former job if they and their family are used to having four weeks vacation and do not want to give it up. He suggested that the item be held until the policy can be clarified going forward.

Chief Redman suggested allowing the City Administrator discretion upon hire to recognize or grant executive according to how long the person worked in their former position.

Ald. Casey said he was comfortable with including people at grade 14 and above as these are largely department heads or key people answering to department heads. He noted that the city has to be competitive in order to retain executive level employees.

Ald. Bruderle-Baran indicated that the policy could offer employees one extra week of executive leave at the discretion of City Administrator if they were hired at grade 10 are currently at grade 14 and not maxed out on their vacation up to the 21st year of employment.

It was the consensus of the committee to hold this item in order to craft the language for the policy.

Tentative agreement with Wauwatosa Peace Officers' Association

Mr. Wontorek said the city reached an agreement for a 3 year contract with the Wauwatosa Peace Officers' Association (WPOA) on February 17th. The wage package includes a 3% raise for each of the 3 years, a \$50 uniform allowance, and professional time off which allows the officers to be paid instead of taking one of the existing holidays. There were modest enhancements to the health benefits package including some provisions such as Health Risk Assessments and coverage for routine and preventative tests that are normally part of an HMO. Employee contributions for health services will increase significantly over the three year term of the contract. There will be annual deductibles and employees will pay significantly higher costs for generic, formulary and non-formulary prescriptions whether obtained from a retail pharmacy or through the mail. The plan includes a Step Therapy program to make sure the prescription is appropriate to the medical condition. The program of reimbursing employees the co-payment for the second, third, and fourth mail order prescription in a year will end. The agreement also places lower limits on coverage for infertility and chiropractic services.

Mr. Wontorek said the adopted 2005 budget included appropriations sufficient to cover the 3% wage increase for 2005. Increased employee contributions through co-payments and deductibles for services and prescriptions will result in an increased share of the cost being borne by the employees. He recommended approval of the tentative agreement.

Ald. Stepaniak asked if there was any reasonable analysis that there will be a cost savings for the city through the changes in the health benefits. Mr. Wontorek said it was difficult to predict. Out of pocket deductibles and prescription co-pays will save the city money.

Ald. Stepaniak asked if there was any sense of how the issues in Madison pertaining to expenditure restraints will affect the budget with regards to the raises in year 2 and 3. Will the city have the capability to pay for those increases? Mr. Wontorek responded that a lot depends on what happens in Madison. The city has been able to maintain budget increases. Ald. Stepaniak noted that there isn't much room for additional growth. Mr. Wontorek said the city has been able to live within the expenditure restraints. In the future there may have to be adjustments in the level of staffing.

Ald. Casey asked about the professional time off provision. Mr. Wontorek said paying one of the days worked better budget wise than to pay overtime for the coverage.

Moved by Ald. Casey, seconded by Ald. Bruderle-Baran to recommend approval of the tentative agreement with the WPOA – 5

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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