

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, September 20, 2005
Council Chambers

PRESENT: Alds. Bruderle-Baran, Jenkins, Kopischke, Stepaniak – 4

EXCUSED: Ald. Casey

ALSO PRESENT: B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty.; Capt. J. Reit, Police

Ald. Jenkins as Chair called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Position reclassification in the police department

Capt. Reit said that in 2003 a part time property clerk assigned to the detective bureau was laid off for budgetary reasons. At that time another Municipal Clerk I was assigned the duties of this 24 hour per week employee in addition to their regularly assigned duties as detective bureau secretary. This position has taken over the duties of the part time property clerk and relieved the Police Evidence Technician of many routine property related tasks. This position also inventories and organizes the police property room and prepares all items for the Police Auction. This position is also handling the new property room software that will allow for bar code tracking of all property and evidence. He recommended that the position be upgraded adding that the financial impact on the city is minimal.

Moved by Ald. Bruderle-Baran, seconded by Ald. Kopischke to recommend approval of the position reclassification in the police department from Municipal Clerk I to Municipal Clerk II – 4

Health insurance for duty disabled retirees

Ms. Aldana said that at the last meeting, the committee was considering a number of options they could use to formulate a policy regarding health insurance for duty disabled retirees. The discussion focused on an option that would allow duty disabled, Medicare eligible retirees to pay for supplemental health insurance on the same basis as regular retirees pay for primary health insurance (i.e. the retiree only pays if the premium goes up more than 110% of the previous year's premium as well as newly implemented deductibles). One question was how to verify that duty disabled retirees are attempting to apply for Medicare if they are eligible. She found, through a health consultant in the private sector, that there doesn't seem to be a real consistent way that this aspect is being handled.

Ald. Kopischke noted that the Social Security disability system is set up so that 90% of first appeals are rejected and by the third appeal about 50% are getting through. He thought that anyone who goes on disability should be able to satisfy the Personnel Administrator that they have made appropriate efforts to contact the Social Security Administration.

Ald. Stepaniak said there is the possibility that a duty disabled individual could work elsewhere and not pay for health care. There could be a variety of cases where a retiree could not perform certain tasks related to their

employment with the city, but they could do other work and yet the city is paying for them as if they were not working.

Ms. Aldana said there are 3 criteria that cause loss of eligibility: 1) the death of the employee, 2) acceptance of the employee into the Medicare program; and 3) acceptance of the employee into the equivalent paid insurance of another employer.

Ald. Stepaniak urged the committee to try to find the proper mechanism to determine whether the individual is working or not. He said there should be a way to expand the definition to determine duty disability. He noted that the system is predisposed to give a negative answer.

Ms. Aldana said that the city could have a policy stipulating that everyone who goes on duty disability would have to apply for Medicare. The health plan language says that the person must obtain Medicare first. The contract language says the person loses their primary health insurance when they are accepted into Medicare.

Ald. Bruderle-Baran said she would like to see some language that required a person with a duty disability to see a doctor. Ms. Aldana said that anytime a person goes on duty disability there is background information that can be found in that person's records.

Ms. Aldana said they should first address the people that are eligible for Medicare but haven't applied. Ald. Bruderle-Baran suggested that part of the requirement is that the person makes a good faith effort to apply for Social Security disability on a regular basis and that they avail themselves of any health plans should they go back to work.

Ald. Kopischke asked if this should be required of all duty disabled. Ald. Jenkins requested clear guidelines.

It was the consensus of the committee to hold the item until the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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