

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, November 29, 2005
Council Chambers

PRESENT: Alds. Bruderle-Baran, Casey (7:44 p.m.), Jenkins, Kopischke, Stepaniak – 5

ALSO PRESENT: Ald. Grimm; T. Wontorek, City Admin.; A. Kesner, City Atty.; B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty./Personnel Admin.

Ald. Jenkins as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Filling the Appraiser III position in the Assessor's office

Mr. Wontorek recommended that the reclassification be separate from how the position is filled. The result of the process to fill the Appraiser III position will be that one of the three Appraisers in the department will move into that position. The City Assessor has said that her department needs an Appraiser I, II, and III. The process of filling the Appraiser III position would be limited to the current employees in that department that hold the title of Appraiser. It would be a promotion within the department with a testing process that would be the same as offered for other positions with any other bargaining unit members. He added that the union was in support of this testing process.

Ms. Aldana said this process was structured between the city and the union as a non-precedent setting process. This is a one-time only situation which is basically a reclassification, but with a little different process.

Ald. Jenkins asked if the position had to be open to the outside. Ms. Aldana said that this is not an open position, but a reclassification in a unique situation. They wouldn't have been able to have this process if the union had not said it was a non-precedent setting process.

Ald. Grimm said he was unclear as to why the person in the Appraiser II position couldn't have their position reclassified. He expressed concern about the test and the atmosphere surrounding this reclassification. He asked why the Appraiser I involved doesn't have an Appraiser II test instead of Appraiser III. He also was concerned about the grading of the test.

Ms. Aldana said that normally the test would be graded internally. In this situation, the City Assessor does not know what the test will be and will not be designing or grading it. The grading will be done electronically. She reiterated that this is a reclassification. The duties are already being performed by the individual involved and the Assessor feels this causes their position to rise to the level of Appraiser III. The Appraiser I and II will have an equal chance at testing. The question is who will fill the Appraiser III position. The Assessor believes she needs these three position levels for her staffing needs.

Ald. Grimm expressed concern about the qualifications for the Appraiser III position. Ald. Jenkins noted that if a person passes the Appraiser III position test, that most likely means they would qualify for the Appraiser II duties as well. Ald. Grimm said he continued to have reservations about the situation.

Ald. Stepaniak said that this type of situation commonly happens in the workplace. As changes occur in different departments, job descriptions change to fit the jobs being performed. He had some confusion with the reclassification. Treating the process in a non-precedent setting way makes some sense. He suggested that a written understanding of the non-precedent setting aspect of the process be included. Ms. Aldana said that at this

point there is a verbal understanding with the union. The union expressed similar concerns so she will put the non-precedent setting language in writing.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. Bruderle-Baran to recommend approval for the creation of the Appraiser III position in the Assessor's office and that the position be filled from within using a standardized test given to any interested employee holding the position of Appraiser. This will be contingent upon including the non-precedent setting language in writing --

Ald. Jenkins asked if the Appraiser II tests and gets the Appraiser III position will one of the two other employees get the Appraiser II position. Ms. Aldana said that would seem logical.

Ald. Grimm asked if the persons who don't get the position have a right to look at their test results. Ms. Aldana said that would be acceptable.

Ald. Casey said that a standardized test is specific to the skill set required by the position. In reviewing the test results, the employee has an opportunity to see what they have gotten right and wrong and therefore benefit from the experience. A standardized test sets an objective standard.

Ms. Aldana added a point of clarification that there may be a component of the test that will be graded by the city pertaining to city issues, but it will not be graded by the Assessor's office.

Vote on the motion was Ayes: 5

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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