



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, November 9, 2010
Committee Room #2

PRESENT: Alds. Donegan, Organ, Ewerdt, Walsh, Berdan – 5

ALSO PRESENT: J. Archambo, City Admin.; A. Kesner, City Atty.; B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty./HR Director; M. Loy, Health and Prod. Coord.

Ald. Donegan as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

Non-represented staff demographics report

Mr. Archambo told the committee that this report is for informational purposes only. This is not intended for any action.

Ald. Donegan said from this report the committee hoped to consider the premium contributions for retirees.

Mr. Archambo explained the report and told the committee that for anyone hired prior to 2008 or currently retired, the city contributes up to 100% of the previous year's premium. The policy was changed three years ago for employees hired after 2008. The maximum amount paid by the city for these employees is 50%.

Mr. Loy explained the different tables in the report of non-represented employees from 2007 and an analysis of where we are today. Mr. Loy outlined how he categorized the non-represented group.

Ald. Donegan questioned why a recommendation was not being made by staff. He asked staff if they were conflicted about the potential rash of retirements. Ms. Aldana clarified that the report being looked at was pension related and the insurance eligibility piece would be discussed sometime in December. Ms. Aldana noted that at some point it becomes difficult to determine someone's reason for retirement. The tables included in the report provide some demographics for the committee to review.

Mr. Archambo answered Ald. Donegan's question that the potential group of retirees will be manageable. Mr. Archambo said his biggest concern would be in the police department. With the trickle-down effect of filling vacancies, it could take time to fill all of the openings.

Ald. Nikcevich expressed concern that there is not a policy in place for retirees to give advanced notice to the city. Mr. Archambo explained that if a change is made to the ordinance regarding health insurance that it might be one way to further qualify an individual to provide at least one month's notice, which is the length of time it takes to get through the WRS process.

Ald. Nikcevich asked that the Employee Relations committee review the payout clause. She felt that it takes too long to replace individuals. She felt that there is a lack of planning by not having any lead time

and has concerns about the transitions that will be made. She suggested that transition plans also be put into place. Ald. Nikcevich said the city should budget for overlap of employees. She expressed concern that there was not a smooth transition with the Economic Development Director.

Mr. Archambo reported on the memo sent out regarding the appointed interim department directors which will go to council on November 16th. He suggested that these individuals are acting effectively already and most have many years of experience in the department. Mr. Archambo noted that in the past it could take up to six months to fill one of these positions and they are working on getting them filled in two to four months, so the timeline has been shortened.

Ald. Walsh inquired about the number of retirees on the health plan. He asked that this information be provided. Additional information on retirement will be presented along with insurance information at a meeting in December.

Consideration to maintain or revise current ordinance regarding residency requirements for certain City employees

Ms. Aldana said that this is a preliminary communication for future direction. She noted that this discussion comes up every couple of years. She said there is no one item driving this discussion at this time although in discussions with Mr. Archambo they are bringing it to committee for discussion.

Ms. Aldana noted the most recent waiver for residency requirement was with the hiring of the city assessor. She said if there is a reason to discuss this it would be for the reason of the three upcoming vacancies.

Mr. Archambo asked the committee to take the report and reflect on it. He said that he likes to think that everyone would want to live in the city they work in. However, the reality is that it does not work out for a variety of reason. The requirement has been on the books for a number of years and waivers have been given out for a number of reasons. He suggested starting the conversation now rather than wait knowing there are three positions to be filled. Mr. Archambo said given the economy it is going to be difficult for someone to sell their home and buy a home in Wauwatosa which gives him a great deal of concern. Mr. Archambo suggested lifting the requirement for every position except his. He noted that if you truly want to attract the most qualified candidate residency shouldn't come into play.

Chief Weber agreed with Mr. Archambo and felt that the residency requirement was archaic. He felt a uniform system needs to be put into place and followed.

Asst. Chief Carberry felt the residency issue was different for the fire department as they have a support schedule they are required to follow in a specific time span. He felt it is important during emergencies to get all the emergency operations personnel in place in a very short time. He supports the residency issue for the assistant and deputy chiefs but not necessarily the chief.

Ald. Meaux felt there is a value of having a director living in some proximity of their job. He said there is some value in having a vested interest and understanding the pulse of the city. He questioned what would be a good proximity if not city residency. Where do you draw the line, one or two counties away? How far is too far. He cautioned the removal of any residency restriction.

Ald. McBride felt there should be a proximity range and felt it would make sense to determine this. He suggested that long term policies shouldn't be made for short term consideration. He thought if the city thinks that a residency policy makes sense it shouldn't be thrown out.

Ms. Aldana answered a question that the requirement is to move to Wauwatosa within one year of hiring or six months after completing probation. She asked the committee to consider whether they would be prepared to walk away from a choice candidate if they won't or can't move into the city.

Ms. Aldana responded to another question that if you post a position requiring residency it is a mixed bag whether people will apply and hope to negotiate out of the requirement or they won't apply at all. She said that is the risk. Ald. Ewerdt felt that department directors should live in the city as the policies they put into place they have to live with. He felt they should be connected to their community.

The City Attorney commented that there are alternatives that could be put into place. For instance a salary premium could be offered for city residency or close to it. The employee and employer would benefit from this.

Ald. Donegan felt there is a sense of urgency to fill the open positions with the right people and wants to support the City Administrator by lifting the residency restriction. He felt a decision needs to be made right away as recruitment is ongoing.

The City Attorney advised that there is a timeline for an ordinance change. Ms. Aldana noted that it could be done sooner under suspension of rules.

Ald. Walsh said he is not in favor of waiving the residency requirement. He felt that there should be a rule in place and followed. He thought there is merit to living in the city you work in.

Ald. Berdan didn't think there is a compelling reason to live in the city.

Ald. Organ also was not in favor of the waiver. She felt the directors should live in the city and with the timeline given; she felt there was ample time for them to make that commitment.

Moved by Ald. Berdan, seconded by Ald. Donegan
to change the ordinance to allow the residency waiver
for the three open positions: Public Works Director,
Comptroller, and Fire Chief - Ayes: 2 Noes: 3 (Organ, Walsh, Ewerdt)

Mr. Archanbo thanked the committee for their comments.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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