



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
7725 WEST NORTH AVENUE
WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN 53213
Telephone: (414) 479-8917
Fax: (414) 479-8989
Web Site: www.wauwatosa.net

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Committee Room #2

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

ALSO PRESENT: J. Archambo, City Admin.; A. Kesner, City Atty.; B. Aldana, Asst. City Atty./HR Dir.;
M. Loy, Health and Prod. Coor.; Asst. Chief M. Anton, Fire Dept.; Mayor Didier

Ald. Donegan as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Discussion of duties, responsibilities, and compensation package of the mayor

Ms. Aldana commented that this discussion was requested from the committee regarding the mayor's compensation. This was previously discussed in committee in 2008 and a survey of mayors and elected officials was prepared.

Ald. Donegan said that this discussion is not about any particular mayor but about the position description by state statute and local ordinance. Ald. Donegan asked for clarification on the duties and responsibilities as they are fairly general in the statute. Ms. Aldana commented that the description is general but there are a few specific duties. For example the Mayor is head of the police and fire department per state statute. Ald. Donegan felt the job description is too broad. It was noted that the city administrator position was started in the 1970's. Prior to that the mayor carried out those functions, where department heads probably reported to the mayor. Little is known by staff about the mayor responsibilities before that time.

Discussion ensued about the part-time position and how many hours a mayor was expected to work. Is the mayor expected to be in the office a certain number of hours and available to constituents certain hours of the day. There is not a requirement but should it be an expectation? The committee felt that the mayors' job description should be more defined.

Ald. Ewerdt said this idea was originated because of a discussion he had with a former mayor. He felt that the mayor's salary is an embarrassment and the compensation should be a lot fairer. Ald. Ewerdt compared the City of Wauwatosa's mayor with neighboring communities. The committee asked for more information on neighboring communities to include if they had both mayors and administrators and their pay scale. Any benefit package should also be included. Ald. Ewerdt asked how this item would move forward. Ms. Aldana noted that it could not take effect until the next mayoral term which is in 2012. Because of that timeline it would not go to Budget and Finance at this time.

Former Mayor Jim Benz, 2504 N. 83rd St. noted that the mayor position was never classified as part-time, only discussed. He said there is nothing definitive stating it is part-time. Ald. Ewerdt said he would like to see the salary range increased to the \$45,000 range to make it more of a living wage. He said with the current salary a single person or head of household could not live on that. This could affect the pool of candidates considering running for Mayor.

Ald. Berdan thanked Ms. Aldana for the information and agreed that the salary needs to be looked at along with what the job description should be. If there is a way to make it more efficient that would be important to the constituents.

Ald. Krol felt that the council needs to define what their expectations are. He agreed that in 2012 we might be eliminating our candidate pool because of the low salary. He questioned whether a fringe benefit package should be added.

Ald. Donegan apologized to the people in the audience that due to lack of time would be unable to speak and asked them to come back to the next meeting. He asked Ms. Aldana to provide further information on what legal authority the mayor has over the police and fire commission.

Mayor Didier expressed concern that it is not the role and responsibility of the council to define the mayor position. She felt that the council needs to be looking at the budget for next year and not wasting energy to define something that is not definable. She said city staff is tasked with many other issues such as infrastructure, health care, budget, and contracts and felt that this is a waste of time.

This item will be continued at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Discussion of practice regarding salary and benefits of non-represented employees

Per the committees request information was presented regarding compensation of the non-represented employees. Ms. Aldana presented some general background information.

Ms. Aldana noted that there are approximately 100 non-represented employees in the city. She said the wages for 2010 have already been approved in the ordinance when the labor packages were established. The ordinance was written through 2010.

Ald. Donegan asked if the ordinance could be amended and Ms. Aldana responded yes. Ald. Donegan asked the committee if they wished to take action on this in any way.

Ms. Aldana reported to the committee that a new hire is placed in a certain grade level and allowed to have step increases until they reach the top level. She said that there is a maximum of 13 step increases. Ms. Aldana said there is some latitude to place a new hire between step one and mid range, but it is more typical that they begin at grade 1. When asked, Ms. Aldana speculated that the majority of non-represented personnel work in the city hall building.

Ald. Krol said it seems that the non-represented employees would receive the same cost of living increase as the represented employees.

Ms. Aldana explained to the committee that all of the bargaining unit contracts expire at the end of 2010. She reported that contracts will open up in September of 2010 and all are active at the same time. The committee questioned whether the city always negotiated three-year contracts and Ms. Aldana replied that all of the contracts she has negotiated have had three-year terms, although there is no obligation to that term length.

Ald. Donegan asked what percentage of the non-represented personnel are still in the step process. Ms. Aldana noted that this data was given awhile ago but said generally there is a large number who have already gotten to

the final step. She responded to a question that the step increase is about 2%. The cost of living set by council for 2010 is 2.75%. Ms. Aldana reported that the benefit package is essentially identical for represented and non-represented, except for the pension.

Ald. Donegan commented to the committee that the city is about to present a 5% increase to many non-represented employees with a benefit package by ordinance unless someone wants to change it.

Ald. Walsh commented that he thinks the system is working well, that the employees are being fairly compensated and he is not getting any feedback from constituents regarding this.

Ald. Donegan felt there was no reason to proceed if the committee didn't want to make any changes.

Assistant Chief, Mike Anton, Chair of the Employee Council, wanted to make sure that the committee members understand that there is a differentiation between the step-grade system which was recently re-evaluated by Carlson Dettman and the annual cost of living increase. He noted that these are two distinct issues and if there is further discussion they should be discussed separately.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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