

PROCEEDINGS OF
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WEST BLOOMFIELD
4550 WALNUT LAKE ROAD
CONFERENCE ROOM 76

Tuesday, March 10, 2009 --- 12:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Brown at 12:50 p.m.

Members Present: Trustee Larry Brown
 Trustee Steve Kaplan
 Trustee Howard Rosenberg

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Kent Herbert, Human Resources Director
 Marya Duncan, HR Specialist
 Edwin Haapala, Water & Sewer Director

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were presented for approval.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Dispatcher Hiring Ordinance or Policy Final Review

Mr. Herbert stated that all changes requested at the last meeting have been made. He stated the only change he thought should be made was with respect to a reduction in the number of people being interviewed from 20 to 16 individuals. This would be consistent with the general clerical hiring policy. Mr. Brown agreed that the language should be consistent. The change would be made in section 19.23-2.

Mr. Herbert stated the only other item that needed to be considered was whether the hiring procedure should be an ordinance or policy. Mr. Brown stated that the Township Board should make the final decision with respect to that issue.

Mr. Herbert stated that if something unusual happens such as not having enough applicants who qualify for an interview, the township would have the ability to change a policy in one meeting to allow for fewer interviews. However, an ordinance amendment would require multiple meetings.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that is what government is for and indicated that he preferred an ordinance over a policy. Mr. Brown felt it was up to the Township Board to decide if it should be a policy or an ordinance. He wanted the Township Attorney to provide advice as to the penalties, if any, for failure to comply with the ordinance. Mr. Kaplan stated that a resident dissatisfied with even a minor deviation in the ordinance could seek injunctive relief in circuit court.

Mr. Rosenberg felt there needed to be at least two meetings to make any changes in a policy as opposed to the Board acting impulsively in making a quick change. However, the Board could make a change with only one reading of the policy under certain circumstances. He added that no policy could be changed without board approval.

Motion by Mr. Kaplan and supported by Mr. Rosenberg to recommend to the Township Board language regarding the hiring procedure at the 03/16/09 meeting and that the Township Board decide as to whether the hiring procedure should be an ordinance or policy.

Ayes: Brown, Kaplan, Rosenberg

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried

General Employee Hiring Ordinance or Policy Final Review

Mr. Herbert stated that all requested changes have been made. The only item that has come up since the last meeting is with respect to the option of allowing up to four applicants rather than three to be interviewed at the Board for Department Head positions.

Mr. Brown stated that the oral board consists of two persons designated by the Personnel Officer, which may include the Personnel Officer. He stated by definition the Supervisor is the Personnel Officer. Mr. Herbert stated language should be added to allow for the Oral Board to include the Personnel Officer, the Supervisor and their designee.

Motion by Mr. Kaplan and supported by Mr. Rosenberg to recommend to the Township Board approval of the language as worded with modifications.

Ayes: Brown, Kaplan, Rosenberg

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried

NEW BUSINESS

Water and Sewer Billing Office Supervisor

Mr. Brown asked for clarification related to the steps involving a resident who comes into the Township with a problem with their bill. Mr. Haapala stated that when a resident comes in and asks for assistance with a water bill, he has to sign off on it. If the bill is not paid by the end of August, a 6% fee and an additional 2% fee is assessed for every month thereafter until the tax bill is paid in full. He stated there is no free service in the Township for water use. He added that there are currently 20 hardship cases in the Township.

Mr. Brown asked if it was possible for the Billing Department to provide a resident with guidelines to address to certain circumstances. Mr. Haapala stated that most people would still want to speak to someone in a supervisory role.

Mr. Haapala stated that currently, Sally Belanger-Walsh was the "go to" person for billing questions and the use of the billing software. The other Billing Analyst is expected to retire at the end of the year. He indicated that Sally will be required to train any new employee in the Water & Sewer Billing Department.

Mr. Haapala stated that he was asking for a half step increase from level 4.5 to 5 to upgrade Sally's position to a Supervisory position.

Mr. Rosenberg believed that the perception on the Board in approving a promotion and an increase in a time when they are expected to make cuts would not be a good one, no matter where the money is coming from. Mr. Rosenberg stated it would be more appropriate to request this type of increase during the budget approval in 2010.

Mr. Kaplan agreed with Mr. Haapala for three reasons: (1) money is not coming out of the General Fund, but rather, the Water & Sewer Fund, (2) there is concern that an employee in that position may become overworked, and (3) he feels it is bad management to inform residents who wish to speak to a supervisor that one is not available.

Mr. Rosenberg asked why the Assistant Director could not act in the supervisory role for these complaints. It was stated that the Assistant Director is not physically at the Township offices; his office is located on Haggerty Road.

Mr. Haapala stated that the Assistant Director should actually work at the Township Offices to supervise the Billing Department and where he is also the liaison with the Engineering Department. Mr. Haapala stated that he is not at the location because there is no office space available.

Mr. Brown suggested that the Assistant Director be moved to the Township Offices. He stated that moving the Assistant Director to that location would eliminate the need to promote a current employee to a level 5 position. Mr. Haapala stated the Assistant Director would be in the Township Office's on a full-time basis.

Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Brown to table the matter to the next Personnel Committee meeting pending Mr. Haapala's investigation relative to moving the Assistant Director position to the Township Offices.

Ayes: Brown, Rosenberg

Nays: Kaplan

Motion carried

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at * p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marya Duncan

Marya Duncan
HR Specialist