

**PROCEEDINGS OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE  
WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL  
4550 WALNUT LAKE ROAD  
CONFERENCE ROOM 75/76  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2009 – 12:45 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Trustee Larry Brown called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

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

Members absent: None

Staff Present: Denise Maier, Human Resources Director  
Teresa Hebert, Asst IT Director  
Millie Gray, Office Manager  
Linda Furman, Sr. Development Clerk  
Dora Montgomery, Executive Director  
Lisa Hobart, Township Assessor  
Teri Weingarden, Township Treasurer  
Catherine Shaughnessy, Township Clerk

General Public: None

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Kaplan to approve the agenda as submitted.**

**Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown, Kaplan**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: None**

**Motion carried**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Kaplan to approve the minutes of July 7, 2009 as presented.**

**Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown, Kaplan**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: None**

**Motion carried**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **CLERICAL STAFFING IN THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE**

Mr. Brown asked Mrs. Hobart to give an overview of what she was proposing to the Personnel Committee to fill her vacant clerical position. Mrs. Hobart stated that over the past 12 months or more the Assessing Department has streamlined the work process in many regards: (1) utilizing technology with digital sketches and photography, (2) a record number of tax tribunals, and (3) eliminated a clerical position. Recent circumstances have left them with only one (1) clerical person.

Mrs. Hobart stated her staff consisted of herself; Dan Sears, Chief Appraiser; two (2) part-time individuals in Assessment Administration; four (4) appraisers; one (1) Assessing Clerk and one (1) Appraiser Specialist. Mr. Brown asked about the difference between an Appraiser and an Appraiser Specialist. Mrs. Hobart stated it generally had to do with the technology end of the department. She explained that the Dan Sears currently spends the majority of his time working with Michigan Tax Tribunal appeals. Richard Banks also spends much of his time with Tax Tribunals. Mathew Pollick and Angela Skiver are fairly new and still training as it relates to field work. In addition, one appraiser is on restricted duty and therefore, unable to do field work.

Mrs. Hobart stated that currently, her department is at its lowest staffing levels since she has been in place and indicated that it was done purposely and with careful consideration. A few things came up that were not anticipated, such as the number of tax tribunals and having an appraiser that is unable to do field work. Mrs. Hobart stated that currently, one (1) clerical person handles the phones and counter. Tax bills were recently sent out, which has increased the number of phone calls. In addition, she has to bring in the limited number of appraisers to help with clerical functions. This has resulted in burning out the staff and nearly exhausting overtime funds.

**CLERICAL STAFFING IN THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE (Continued)**

Mr. Brown asked if Mrs. Hobart was seeking to replace a clerical opening. Mrs. Hobart stated she was recommending that it was not an option to not defend tax tribunals, to not complete the field work, to not go to Henry Ford Hospital and identify the assessable property.

Mrs. Hobart presented spreadsheets reflecting the number of physical assessments that are waiting to be completed and other related materials. Mrs. Hobart stated they are currently converting all their 35mm photos to digital and all of their sketches to their new Apex Software. She gave an overview of the process, which included appraisals, verification of exceptions, and keeping track of all state statutes.

Mrs. Hobart proposed that a vacant position within the Assessing Department be filled with an individual from the Treasurer's Office who currently performs a small portion of the work as part of her duties within the Treasurer's Office. Mrs. Hobart stated it would allow for streamlining the process. She was sensitive to the position of Board as it related to budget issues and the hiring freeze. Therefore, consolidating the positions could ultimately save a position in the event of layoffs.

Mrs. Hobart stated that she already had a discussion with Mrs. Weingarden about this issue. It was her understanding that the individual being considered to fill the vacancy is not opposed to the transfer, but would prefer to stay in her current position.

Mrs. Weingarden stated she fully understands that Mrs. Hobart needs to staff her department and supported that issue. However, she could not spare an individual from her department at the present time. Mrs. Weingarden stated the current staffing level within the Treasurer's Office consists of six and  $\frac{1}{4}$  members in her department. One part-time individual spends  $\frac{1}{4}$  of her time on Water & Sewer functions and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of her time Treasurer functions. A lot of her staff are senior employees and have a lot of vacation time to use throughout the year.

Mrs. Weingarden stated the employee being considered for the position within the Assessing Department currently serves as the primary back-up. She also has many other functions in addition to handling name and address changes.

Mrs. Weingarden stated that the Treasurer's Office work load has increased throughout the years. There is a consistent work flow within the department. Additionally, a senior employee has expressed intent to retire in a year and a half, which would leave her department understaffed.

**CLERICAL STAFFING IN THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE (Continued)**

Mr. Brown asked if there were other employees currently working in the Township that could fill the position. Mrs. Hobart stated there were employees in other departments who previously worked in the Assessing Department. However, those individuals left the department for various reasons and she was doubtful that they would want to return. Mrs. Hobart understood that everyone has a lot of work to do and felt her proposal would address the future economic times of the Township as well as to prevent an immediate layoff.

Mr. Rosenberg asked if a comparison has been made relative to the duties of the positions in both the Assessing Department and Treasurer's Office. He indicated that someone would be unhappy no matter the decision.

Mrs. Weingarden stated that in the past, the Treasurer's Department has made approximately 40% in cuts from its previous staffing levels. She did not feel other departments have made such cuts to their staffing levels.

Mrs. Shaughnessy stated a cut was made in her staffing level by not replacing the Election Specialist position. However, the Senior Clerk/Recording Secretary position was filled. She recognized that some reorganization may be necessary in the future. She added that her department is currently working with less staff than in previous administrations.

Teresa Hebert stated the address changes were taken on by the Treasurer's Office from the Assessing Department years ago. Ms. Hebert stated that there was only a lag in the Treasurer's Department only a few months out of the year. During the year, the Treasurer's Department has water bills once a month, special assessments, tax bills twice a year and handling phone calls regarding taxable values. The staff is averaging 30 phone calls per person daily as well as 100 to 200 cash register transactions. She stated regardless of the seniority of the employees, coverage for lunch hours and other absences needs to be provided.

Ms. Hebert stated that two (2) of the staff members located in the front area provide coverage for the two (2) staff members located in the back. One of them being Treasurer for the balancing of cash and the other person covers the cash.

Ms. Hebert understood the need to staff the Assessing Department and requiring transfers to address that need. In addition, the Union supports maintaining current employees and utilizing them in other areas.

**CLERICAL STAFFING IN THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE (Continued)**

Mrs. Hobart stated the option was not brought up for debate; but rather, to fill a vacancy as well as meet a significant need within the department. She has one (1) clerical employee to perform all the clerical work who needs to be relieved for the lunch hour. If the Board decides not to allow for an individual from the Treasurer's Office to fill the vacancy in her department, she needs to know how to staff her department. She currently has three (3) people in her department that are still in training; one (1) clerical and two (2) appraisers.

Mr. Kaplan questioned why the Township does not use interns to fill vacant positions. Mrs. Hobart stated she would be able to use interns if there was someone available. However, that individual could not take the place of a trained/certified staff member. She has used volunteers in the past, but some of them were not willing to do the necessary work.

Mrs. Hobart stated that when she had openings in her department in the past, there was no interest from employees in other departments to work in the Assessing Department. She expressed concern about the current workload and special projects, if she was not able to transfer an individual from another department.

Mr. Brown asked whether individuals could rotate between departments during their peak times. He stated it would allow individuals to learn other areas, cross train and help secure their longevity.

Mrs. Hobart did not feel she would be successful in getting anyone in Town Hall to volunteer to work in the Assessing Department if a lot of overtime is required. On the other hand, she felt that if an individual was hired from the outside, she would be faced with having to lay off that individual in a short time. This would result in time and money spent on training being wasted and she would still be faced with an understaffed department and having to transfer individuals from other departments.

Mrs. Hebert stated that if there was in fact a Utility Person that had the ability to go to different departments as needed, they may want to consider making that position full-time and possibly at a higher pay grade than other clerical positions. She added that employees have expressed an interest in this type of position.

Mr. Brown asked if there was an individual that could be moved to the Assessing Department on a temporary basis to cover their immediate needs. Mrs. Hobart was concerned that a temporary person would not be able to do what her department needs. She cautioned that it would not look good for the department to have an individual who could not answer the basic questions asked by residents. She stated that if she was going to spend time training someone, she wanted it to be on a permanent basis.

**CLERICAL STAFFING IN THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE (Continued)**

Mr. Kaplan expressed concern with the morale of the Assessing Department with all the work and stress within that department.

Mrs. Shaughnessy suggested that each Department Head be asked if they could spare a person to help out in the Assessing Department. Mrs. Hobart stated she is in a state of emergency and needs a person. Mrs. Weingarden stated she simply did not have an extra person to spare at this time since tax season is around the corner. She added that individuals in her department were already working overtime.

Mr. Brown stated that having the person in the Treasurer's Office fill the position would be the quickest fix. He thought it would be easier to fill the position in the Treasurer's Office. Mrs. Hobart stated she already asked Mr. Labadie whether the Development Services could spare a person and he indicated that he was unsure.

Mrs. Hobart stated that there would always be an issue whenever a transfer/reassignment is made. She added that the functions performed in the Assessing Department affected each department in Town Hall.

**Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Kaplan to move this item to the next Township Board meeting on August 3, 2009, at which time the Human Resources Director will provide details about jobs, an evaluation of the efficiency of transferring from the Treasurer's Department, recommendation if any other department may be able to transfer an individual, along with input from Mrs. Hobart and Mrs. Weingarden.**

**Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown, Kaplan**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: None**

**Motion carried**

**REVIEW GENERAL EMPLOYEES HIRING PROCESS**

Mr. Brown wanted to review and clarify the General Employee Hiring process. Recently, there was an individual who was hired prior to taking a clerical test and she did not score as high on the test as other individuals who took the test. Therefore, he wanted to be sure that everyone was clear on the test that was given.

A hard copy of the test was shown to the Personnel Committee Members. Mr. Kaplan asked if it was even necessary to give a test. Mr. Brown stated that each department head is given the option as to what portions of the test are to be given.

**REVIEW GENERAL EMPLOYEES HIRING PROCESS (Continued)**

Mr. Rosenberg read the section of the Hiring Process pertaining to testing:

- (a) Written tests, selected by the HR Director, based on the position(s) applied for shall be part of the employment application process to be used in qualifying applicants for consideration. The written tests to be administered must be job related, meet validity requirements, and meet the requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1991, and any other State or Federal hiring requirements.
- (b) Written and/or computer tests are to be given to entry-level full-time and long-term part-time applicants. The minimum acceptable score for consideration for the oral interviews shall be an average of eighty (80%) percent on the written and/or computer tests.

Mrs. Shaughnessy stated that the previous HR Director made a determination that a speed typing test was essential for clerical positions. She stated that the Recording Secretaries have indicated that speed is not essential in transcribing minutes. She was hopeful that a test could be put together that would work for her department.

Mrs. Shaughnessy stated that an exemption should be provided for temporary election workers since these individuals generally work more than 20 weeks during elections.

Mrs. Shaughnessy asked for consideration to approve the amendment to the language in the hiring policy as well as consideration to approve the hiring policy. Mr. Brown asked if they were approving an ordinance over a policy. Mrs. Shaughnessy stated that the policy is approved first and the ordinance is rescinded at another meeting.

**AUDIENCE GENERAL COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

*Marya Duncan*

Marya Duncan  
HR Specialist

*NOTE: Approved minutes of this meeting are maintained as part of the public record and are available upon request. A fee will be required for copies of all meeting tapes and and/or approved minutes. Please contact the Human Resources Department for information.*