

**PROCEEDINGS OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL
4550 WALNUT LAKE ROAD
CONFERENCE ROOM 75/76
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 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 Howard Rosenberg

Members absent: Trustee Steve Kaplan

Staff Present: Denise Maier, Human Resources Director
Chief Poppelreiter, Fire Chief
Pat Riney, Fire Department
Ron Lee, Water & Sewer Department
Teresa Hebert, TPOAM Unit 1 President
Linda Furman, Development Services Department
Dora Montgomery, Fire Department
Patty Hicks, Clerk's Office
Sandi McGill, Clerk's Office
Diane Karpov, Finance Department
Nancy Savickas, Finance Department
Teri Weingarden, Township Treasurer
Catherine Shaughnessy, Township Clerk

General Public: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Rosenberg stated that he received numerous documents related to the Reorganization of the Treasurer's Department. He received those documents this morning and did not feel there was sufficient time to consider the issue. Therefore, he asked that the item be placed on the next agenda. He stated that although the information related to Item 6B was just received today, he wanted to consider that information since Assistant Fire Chief Weisman previously contacted him and presented the information.

Ms. Weingarden stated that she was given incorrect budget information by the Budget Director which indicated that the Treasurer's Office complement continued to include the salary for the employee who was taken from her office and placed in the Assessing Department. She was informed yesterday that the salary for the employee was removed from her budget. Since the Board was in the process of a second revision to the budget, she felt it was an urgent situation that needed to be presented to the Committee today.

Ms. Weingarden stated although she understood that the Committee had to conduct their own research, she respectfully asked that the issue be scheduled for a meeting in the very near future to allow for her as well as staff to understand where they stood from a personnel standpoint.

Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Brown to approve the agenda as amended with the elimination of Item 6C, Reorganization of the Treasurer's Department and the addition of discussion regarding Scheduling Regular Personnel Committee meetings and submission of information.

**Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown
Nays: None
Absent: Kaplan
Motion carried**

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Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Brown to approve a standing Personnel Committee meeting to be held on the last Wednesday of each month beginning at 12:30 p.m. and ending at 2:00 p.m. All agenda items must be requested to the Chair one (1) one week prior (the Wednesday prior) to the meeting and all materials for consideration must be submitted by noon on the Friday prior to the meeting.

**Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown
Nays: None
Absent: Kaplan
Motion carried**

Mr. Rosenberg stated that materials or information related to a particular item submitted by individuals other than the requestor will be considered by the Committee at the meeting for which the item is scheduled. He added that this process is similar to that of the Clerk's Office for items to be placed on any Township Board agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Rosenberg and supported by Mr. Kaplan to approve the minutes of July 22, 2009 as presented.

**Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown
Nays: None
Absent: Kaplan
Motion carried**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

Ms. Shaughnessy stated she decided not to fill the Elections Specialist position which was vacated at the untimely loss of Marilyn Henry. Rather, she was proposing to reorganize the current staff by reassigning the duties of Elections Specialist Coordinator. She stated her intent is to eliminate the Elections Specialist position, thereby saving the Township and taxpayers approximately \$100,000 annually.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that after many weeks of evaluating the skills of the current staff and weighing that against the responsibilities of the job, she came up with a proposal to split the responsibilities of the position between two existing positions in the Clerk's Office complement. She proposed to divide the Elections Specialist job into two categories: technical and administrative.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated the technical responsibilities have been added to the Senior Data Processor position. The individual currently holding the position is not only more than capable, but has risen to the occasion as the office prepares for the November election. This individual has been performing most of the duties and working closely with her.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated it was her intent to administer the upcoming election while working with the Senior Data Processor and training the new Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant. The Senior Data Processor has agreed to the added responsibilities with the full understanding that a pay grade change would not be proposed at this time. Although she was adding new tasks, many of these tasks were already being performed by the Senior Data Processor in an assisting capacity. The Senior Data Processor assisted with almost all of the technical aspects of the job and in this case, that individual will be in charge of the technical responsibilities.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that she would be overseeing all aspects of election administration; however, full assistance would be provided to her by the Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant position. She concluded that the Clerk's Office needed two full-time Recording Secretary positions as well as one full-time back-up Recording Secretary position. The title of Elections Assistant has been added to one Recording Secretary job description with the intent that all administrative tasks previously performed by the Elections Specialist will now be completed by this individual either entirely or by assisting the Township Clerk.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated the accounting responsibilities that were previously handled by the Elections Specialist have been added to the Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant job description. Since the Clerk is responsible for the Finance Department, her candidate evaluations and interviews for this position required accounting and bookkeeping experience.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that many of the clerical responsibilities for the Recording Secretary have been removed in order to make the jobs more equitable; however, she was not proposing a pay grade change at this time.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that the Clerk and the Finance Department remain committed to doing more with less. She referred to the organizational chart of the Clerk's Office and indicated that the changes were reflected in red.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Mr. Rosenberg asked what responsibilities of the Elections Specialist job description she will be handling that was not handled by the former Clerk.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that with respect to the Elections Coordinator, there are still some aspects of the job that will include assistance to the Clerk such as the coordination of election duties.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that not all of the duties of the Elections Specialist position have been incorporated into the two proposed positions. Ms. Shaughnessy stated the duties have been incorporated, but in a different format. Instead of overseeing, the positions are now assisting the Clerk. Mr. Rosenberg stated that the Clerk would be overseeing the elections. Ms. Shaughnessy stated that was correct.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated she changed the requirements for both positions. An Associates Degree, preferably in administration is required for the Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant position. In addition, the position would require Certification in Elections Administration, preferably municipal election experience for the future of this job description.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that some of the election duties involve accounting and bookkeeping since the cost of school elections has to be accounted for as well as allocated to the schools. Therefore, the individual in the Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant position should have that experience.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that when Marilyn Henry became ill, she spent a lot of time with the former Township Clerk. The former Clerk found herself administering elections that she had not done in many years and it was extremely difficult. Ms. Henry handled many tasks that no one else in the office did. The Senior Data Processor went into the electronic files and found all the tasks that had to be completed.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that she did not want to be in a position in which only one person in the office knows what to do in an election. She stated that was what happened in the 2008 election. Therefore, she wanted to know how to complete all aspects of election administration.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that with respect to the Recording Secretary position, it was indicated that a lot of the clerical responsibilities were removed. He asked who would be performing those duties. Ms. Shaughnessy replied that those responsibilities are performed by all three Recording Secretaries as well as the Senior Clerk Typist. The duties were removed from the job description to make it more equitable.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Ms. Shaughnessy stated she had a Senior Clerk Typist within her staff that is able to perform many clerical duties. During the weeks in which the Recording Secretaries are taking minutes, she has not required those staff members to handle the counter or perform many of the clerical duties since it can take several days to type the minutes.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that within the past ten months, it has taken her a great deal of time to get a handle on the duties that each staff member is responsible for performing.

Mr. Brown felt the Township Clerk should be in charge of the election and commented that it was admirable that Ms. Shaughnessy was willing to administer the aspects of the election. He added that he did not have a problem with the proposal as presented.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated she had discussions with the staff members involved regarding the changes. She wanted everyone to know as much as they possibly can and all of them will continue to do what they have always done.

Ms. Savickas stated years ago, the employees had an Equity Committee and after years of random job assignments, job descriptions and pay grade assignments, it was discovered that there was a lot of inequities across the Township. The Equity Committee was comprised of elected officials, management, and employee representatives. In the course of reviewing every single position, a point system was utilized and as positions increased with complexity and additional assignments, the point values increased.

Ms. Savickas stated the Personnel Committee needs to review the duties previously assigned to a pay grade level 6 that are now being assigned to a pay grade level 5 and consider whether that pay grade needs to be increased to level 5.5.

Ms. Savickas stated that with respect to the accounting and bookkeeping duties, there are going to be individuals in various departments that handle billing because the new BS & A system is very easy and user-friendly and those positions would not require an accounting degree or an accounting background.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated the position does not require an accounting degree. She stated the Elections Specialist Coordinator position required some of that work to be done. The accounting tasks taken from the Elections Specialist position are now being handled by the Township Clerk with assistance from another staff member.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Mr. Brown stated that Ms. Savickas needed to understand that those duties were not the responsibility of the Elections Coordinator, but rather, the Clerk. Therefore, the individual is not taking on the higher level of responsibilities, but rather assisting the Clerk who will be handling those responsibilities.

Ms. Hebert referred to the Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant and asked who would be filling that position. Ms. Shaughnessy replied that the position would be filled by the individual who was recently hired in the Clerk's Office.

Ms. Hebert stated that currently, there are individuals within the Clerk's Office who have been in place for many years and assisted with the elections. For example, Carol Secord provided assistance and her job description indicates that she serves as a back-up to the Senior Data Processor/Elections Coordinator.

Ms. Hebert expressed concern that the individual who would be filling the position has no background in West Bloomfield elections and the responsibilities reflected in the job description are higher level duties. However, those duties are not reflected in the Senior Data Processor/Elections Coordinator job description, which is a higher pay grade level.

Ms. Hebert stated that if Ms. Shaughnessy was not available, the new staff member with no prior experience would be responsible for administering or coordinating the election duties in her absence. She stated that an individual exists in the Clerk's Office who has prior experience and also served as back-up for the Finance Department for many years.

Ms. Hebert expressed concern that a long-term employee could possibly be laid off in the future because another individual with less experience was given preferential treatment in training.

Ms. Hebert expressed concern that other individuals with more experience in elections will not be given the opportunity to apply for the position. She added that the union contract reflects that changes to job descriptions or the addition of new job descriptions requires the job to be posted.

Ms. Savickas stated that in the past when her job description was changed, it was posted each time and she had to reapply for the position. She added that it has been past practice that when a job description is changed or upgraded; the position is posted for a period of eight (8) days.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Ms. Furman expressed concern with the position not being posted and simply being assigned to an individual. She stated that when the position was originally posted, it was done so as a Recording Secretary position only. She stated that she has over ten years of experience in working with elections and she would have been interested in the position.

Ms. Furman stated it was her understanding that an individual who is on probation for the one year as required by the Township, cannot apply for other positions until the probationary period has passed.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that it was her responsibility to administer the elections and to ensure the elections run smoothly. She had some issues in the May election and there were huge problems. She stated it was also her responsibility to evaluate her staff and to determine what duties they can handle effectively. She stated that everyone in her office has assisted with elections for many years and the technical back-up provided by Carol Secord is a misnomer; she simply assisted the Elections Coordinator. She added that it was her right to choose who can help her administer the elections.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated that this is a new administration. There are a lot of changes occurring and she understood that some of the changes are difficult to accept. She stated it was her responsibility to take a job and ensure that it gets done and it has done according to what she felt would be best for her department. She stated that the Senior Data Processor has indicated that she does not want to handle elections administration.

Mr. Brown stated the Personnel Committee is responsible for considering the reorganization and job descriptions as presented. The union concerns related to the filling of the job descriptions are another issue that is not within the purview of this Committee. Mr. Rosenberg agreed and indicated that he had no objections to the job descriptions as proposed.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that in response to the comments related to the Equity Committee, he felt that committee might indicate that individuals have to do more with the same amount of pay in order to maintain and save jobs in the current economic climate.

Ms. Savickas stated the job descriptions will need to be discussed with the union. Ms. Hebert agreed and read the language in union contract under Article 14, New or Changed Jobs.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Ms. Furman stated that the reorganization of the Development Services Department included discussions with the union and resulted in all the staff members being placed at the same pay grade level.

Mr. Brown asked if the union representatives were indicating that they would like an opportunity to discuss the job changes with Ms. Shaughnessy.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated she was familiar with the language and she was informed by the former Township Clerk that whenever there was a pay grade change or a revised job description, the union was notified after it was approved by the Township Board. Hence, the reason why she proceeded in the manner in which she did.

Ms. Hebert stated the union was simply asking that the Township abide by the language in the contract. She expressed concern that the union was in the midst of negotiations and positions that were part of the union are being revised and given to probationary employees who have no experience.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated she was not going to make this a personal issue. Ms. Hebert stated this was not a personal issue; she simply wanted the Committee to understand that the union is currently in negotiations and there is discussion related to a reorganization that could result in a seven year employee being laid off in the future.

Mr. Brown stated the Committee understood Ms. Hebert's concerns; however, the Committee is simply considering the reorganization and proposed job descriptions at this time.

Ms. Hebert referred to the statement on the reorganizational chart: *Senior Clerk Typist should be a level 4.*" She stated that position was negotiated and upgraded to level 4.5 because additional duties were added to the job description.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated the level 4.5 was never approved at a job description level; it was approved for the individual and she has not been able to find any documentation that changed the job description.

Motion by Mr. Brown and supported by Mr. Rosenberg to recommend approval to the Township Board the reorganizational chart and new job descriptions for Senior Data Processor/Elections Coordinator and Recording Secretary/Elections Assistant subject to review by the Township Labor Attorney for meeting all contractual obligations.

REORGANIZATION OF CLERK'S DEPARTMENT (Continued)

Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown

Nays: None

Absent: Kaplan

Motion carried

FIRE MECHANIC VACANCY

Mr. Riney stated that during the 1960's and 1970's, the Fire Department had a very limited amount of fire apparatus and therefore, a lot of the maintenance issues were handled by outside vendors. As the department grew and accumulated additional apparatus, it became beneficial to utilize on duty personnel who were compensated by overtime. These individuals performed the maintenance on the apparatus in addition to their regular firefighter duties.

Mr. Riney stated the time commitments and required certifications made it difficult as well as cost effective for the individuals to perform the maintenance. As a result, the department hired a full-time mechanic. The individual hired to fill the position did so for 16 years, but has since resigned and moved out of state. This has left the department with a huge gap with respect to the maintenance of their vehicles.

Mr. Riney stated the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief have been coordinating the necessary repairs and service by utilizing qualified outside service vendors. However, the outside services are costly, poses logistical problems and cause service disruptions.

Mr. Riney stated the department has coordinated an agreement with the Police Department and their mechanics who have agreed to work on the smaller vehicles. To address the remaining service voids, the department has conducted research and came up with four options: (1) continue doing business without a mechanic, (2) hire a new mechanic at a cost of \$70,000, (3) utilize the Police Department mechanics, (4) work with Water & Sewer and use their facilities.

Mr. Riney stated the outsourcing has cost approximately \$90 per hour which includes service and shop fees. Over a 14-day period, the department has spent over \$4,000 in parts and labor. That amount would have been \$1,200 if there was a mechanic in-house performing the labor.

Mr. Riney stated to replace the former mechanic would cost approximately \$95,000. Hiring a new mechanic with the savings of benefits would cost approximately \$70,000. Although there is some savings, the department did not feel this was a viable option.

FIRE MECHANIC VACANCY (Continued)

Mr. Riney stated that although the Police Department mechanics are adept at servicing the small vehicles and light service needs, they do not handle the heavy equipment or services that are unique to the fire apparatus. In addition, the mechanics do not hold a Heavy Masters Mechanic Certificate. He stated the mechanics are not flexible enough to work outside of their garage located at the Police Department and the facility cannot accommodate the large trucks.

Mr. Riney stated sharing the cost of mechanics is a good option; however, with the layoffs, budget crunch, and union issues it complicates with morale issues and union situations.

Chief Poppelreiter stated the department simply wanted to utilize existing staff that were mechanically oriented. This would require them to obtain some licensing at a relatively minor cost as well as paying a differential. He stated there has been discussion with the union and they have accepted the proposal.

Mr. Brown stated certified mechanics performed the vehicle maintenance. He asked if the individuals proposed to do the maintenance would be certified as well. Chief Poppelreiter stated that issue would have to be addressed to get the individuals certified. He added that some maintenance functions would still have to be sent out because the necessary facilities and equipment were not available in house.

Chief Poppelreiter stated the department was considering adding a differential of a few thousand dollars as opposed to the overtime rate to perform the maintenance. Mr. Brown commented that it amounted to approximately \$6,000 with benefits. Chief Poppelreiter stated that was correct and indicated that there simply needed to be a Letter of Understanding with the union to amend the contract.

Mr. Riney stated the shift premium breaks down to approximately \$2.17 per hour for a firefighter and \$2.40 per hour when the firefighter performs maintenance functions on their assigned duty day.

Mr. Rosenberg expressed skepticism with the proposal. He asked if the unions were willing to have discussion relative to other items in the contract. Chief Poppelreiter stated they would and agreed to do so. Mr. Rosenberg asked if they would meet with the Labor Committee to discuss this issue.

Mr. Riney stated the proposal would involve a Letter of Understanding. Mr. Rosenberg stated this would open up the contract. Chief Poppelreiter did not feel the union would have any problem having an open discussion with the Labor Committee.

FIRE MECHANIC VACANCY (Continued)

Mr. Rosenberg stated that the union being willing to discuss this issue along with all the other terms and conditions of the contract would be one consideration. The other consideration is if this issue is the only one on the table, he was not sure it was the best idea in terms of consolidating services. He stated that the two individuals who would perform the work are not Master Mechanics and therefore, the work could be done by the Police Department and Water & Sewer Department mechanics.

Chief Poppelreiter stated all the work could not be performed in house without expending a substantial amount of money. Having a mechanic within the department would be ideal. However, the hiring freeze would not allow for that to occur.

Mr. Rosenberg stated he would be willing to consider hiring a Master Mechanic and placing that individual at the Water & Sewer facility, which has two bays available. This individual could perform the maintenance for not only the Fire Department, but the Police Department and Water & Sewer Department as well.

Chief Poppelreiter stated that it would be difficult for one individual to keep up with all that work. Mr. Rosenberg stated that a more thorough review needs to be done to determine exactly what it would take to consolidate all those services into one area. This information should be provided to the Personnel Committee at the October meeting for consideration.

Mr. Riney stated that if an individual were hired under the old plan or the current plan, there is a savings of \$86,000. Therefore, there is a huge benefit to the Township with respect to savings. In addition, it addresses the needs within the department.

Mr. Rosenberg stated the Township was clearly headed towards difficult times and will need all firefighting individuals who are certified EMTs available to perform those functions since the Township was attempting to provide the same amount of service with less.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that if a firefighter is performing mechanical work, the cost opportunity for that firefighter to be on call is less. Chief Poppelreiter disagreed and indicated that although it was not the optimal solution, it could be done. Mr. Riney stated the primary duty is to perform fire runs and the vehicle maintenance would be an ancillary function.

Mr. Rosenberg stated this issue involves the opening up of a contract and therefore, it should be discussed with the Labor Committee rather than senior management and the Fire Department.

Chief Poppelreiter stated that if a mechanic were hired, that individual would be in the TPOAM Unit 1 union rather than the Firefighters union.

FIRE MECHANIC VACANCY (Continued)

Ms. Shaughnessy asked if an estimate has been provided relative to the cost of sending the vehicles out for service. Chief Poppelreiter stated it was approximately \$92 per hour. He stated there is one shop located in Pontiac that charges \$75 per hour.

Ms. Shaughnessy asked about the shift premium. Mr. Riney stated the maintenance issues were covered by a line item and the numbers were not available at the meeting. He stated the documents presented reflect personnel costs. Ms. Shaughnessy stated that based on the costs provided, it appears it might be close to the cost of hiring a mechanic. Mr. Riney stated the numbers provided were related to the savings of hiring a mechanic vs. paying the shift premium.

Mr. Brown suggested that this issue be presented to the Township Board to allow for a Letter of Understanding for two individuals to receive a shift premium for performing vehicle maintenance for a period of 90 days. After the 90 days, it could be renewed on an annual basis depending on the costs involved.

Mr. Rosenberg indicated he could not support that and wanted to see the costs related to mechanical changes at the Water & Sewer facility as well as the costs for hiring a mechanic, including all the employee benefit costs. He wanted to know how much could be saved by using one mechanic for the Water & Sewer Department and the Fire Department as well as any overflow from the Police Department. In addition, he wanted to know what the cost savings would be by assigning the Police Department mechanics to the Water & Sewer Department.

Mr. Brown stated the Fire Department should be able to perform the mechanic duties for a period of 90 days while the study is being conducted since money is being wasted by paying outside services to perform the required maintenance. Mr. Rosenberg stated that if the union would be willing to agree to a completely temporary time frame, he would agree to the 90-day period.

Ms. Shaughnessy stated although she agreed that the Fire Department should be allowed the 90-day period, she agreed that some type of centralized mechanical situation needed to be explored in the interim.

Ms. Hebert stated the mechanics are in the General Office TPOAM Unit 1 union. Therefore, the Letter of Understanding would have to be with TPOAM Unit 1. In addition, Unit 1 would have to work with the Firefighters union for a Letter of Understanding. She expressed concern with the work being pushed off onto other mechanics which may prevent them from completing their normal duties.

FIRE MECHANIC VACANCY (Continued)

Mr. Lee commented that a similar situation occurred in the past within the Water & Sewer Department and the staff performed maintenance on their vehicles at straight time. He stated the staff was not paid overtime to complete those tasks and did not feel that should occur within the Fire Department.

Mr. Riney stated the proposal presented by the Fire Department did not include overtime, but rather a shift differential. Mr. Rosenberg commented that it still involved paying more money to individuals.

Ms. Hebert reiterated that the mechanic position is in the TPOAM Unit 1 the crossover for the completion of duties from another unit has not been allowed in the past. Therefore, Unit 1 should be included in the discussions related to the Letter of Understanding.

Motion by Mr. Brown and supported by Mr. Rosenberg to recommend to the Township Board that a Letter of Understanding be drafted for two individuals to receive a shift premium for performing vehicle maintenance for a period of 90 days.

Ayes: Rosenberg, Brown
Nays: None
Absent: Kaplan
Motion carried

REORGANIZATION OF THE TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT

This item was eliminated from the agenda.

SCHEDULING OF REGULAR MEETINGS

The next meeting was scheduled for October 28, 2009 at 12:30 p.m.

AUDIENCE GENERAL COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Ms. Weingarden stated that although she agreed the reorganization issue is something that should be discussed with the Township Board. However, she was not comfortable discussing the issue until the union contract has been followed. She felt that the new administration has not followed the union contract as far as posting positions, interviewing for positions, or testing for positions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

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.