

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AGENDA
Monday, August 8, 2011 – 6:20 p.m.
(or immediately following previously scheduled meeting)
Water Department – 300 Bliss Avenue

[A quorum of the City Council may attend this meeting]

1. Discussion and possible action on grievance procedure.

Any person who has special needs while attending this meeting or needs agenda materials for this meeting should contact the City Clerk as soon as possible to ensure a reasonable accommodation can be made. The City Clerk can be reached by telephone at (715) 346-1569, TDD# 346-1556, or by mail at 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

Copies of ordinances, resolutions, reports and minutes of the committee meetings are on file at the office of the City Clerk for inspection during normal business hours from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

August 2, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Personnel Committee Members

FROM: Lisa Jakusz, City Personnel

RE: August 8, 2011 Agenda

Wisconsin Act 10 became effective as of June 29, 2011. One of the new provisions in Act 10 is the adoption of Section 66.0509 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Under this new statute, local units of government must establish a grievance procedure no later than October 1, 2011.

Under Section 66.0509 (1m)(c) of the new statute, a grievance procedure must contain a procedure that addresses employee terminations; employee discipline and workplace safety.

Under Section 66.0509 (1m)(d) of the new statute, the grievance procedure must contain all of the following elements:

- A written document specifying the process that a grievant and the employer must follow;
- A hearing before an impartial hearing officer;
- An appeal process in which the highest level of review is the governing body of the government unit.

Included in your packet for consideration at the August 8 meeting is the grievance procedure developed for the City of Stevens Point employees by the City Attorney.

City of Stevens Point

Policy Title: Grievance Procedure

Date of Issuance:

I. Purpose.

The purpose of this Policy is to set forth the procedure to be followed with respect to grievances by employees, union, and non-union. The terms of this Policy shall control unless another valid and enforceable grievance procedure exists in a collective bargaining agreement that applies to the matter.

II. Definitions.

A grievance is defined as a dispute or misunderstanding regarding the actions of City officials with regard to the following:

- Employee termination

“Termination” includes an involuntary end to employment but excludes a voluntary quit; a layoff or failure to be recalled from layoff at the expiration of any recall period; retirement; job abandonment such as “no-call, no-show,” or failure to report to work; any workforce reduction activities; job transfer; action taken for failure to meet the qualifications of a position; action taken pursuant to an ordinance other than an ordinance specifically addressing employee discharge; death; or the end of the employment of a temporary, contract or part-time employee.

- Employee discipline

“Discipline” includes verbal reprimands; written reprimands; and suspensions without pay. Discipline does not include action taken because of poor job performance, performance evaluations, performance improvement plans, or counseling (verbal or written) regarding job performance.

- Workplace safety

“Workplace safety” includes conditions of employment affecting an employee’s physical health or safety, the safe operation of workplace equipment and tools, environmental hazards, safety of physical work environment, personal protective equipment, and workplace violence.

III. Preliminary Procedures.

A. Preliminary Grievance Steps.

Step 1: Prior to filing a written grievance, employees should discuss any problem or complaint with his/her Immediate Supervisor to determine if the grievance can be resolved.

Step 2: If the grievance cannot be resolved at Step 1, the employee must file a written grievance with the City Coordinator no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date the employee first becomes aware of the termination, discipline, or workplace safety condition causing the grievance. The written grievance shall include: (1) a summary of the facts pertaining to the grievance; (2) a listing of all parties involved; (3) the remedy sought by the employee; and (4) the employee's signature. The City Coordinator shall respond to the grievance in writing within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the written grievance.

B. Appeal to Personnel Committee.

Step 3: If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the employee may appeal a denial by filing a written appeal of the grievance with the Personnel Committee within ten (10) calendar days from the City Coordinator's decision. The Personnel Committee shall meet with the parties to discuss the matter. Within seven (7) calendar days of the meeting, the Personnel Committee shall issue a written decision sustaining or denying the grievance.

IV. Hearing Officer Proceedings.

A. Appeal To Hearing Officer.

Step 4: If the grievance is not resolved at Step 3, the employee may appeal a denial by filing a written request for a hearing before a Hearing Officer. This request must be received by the Personnel Committee no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the employee receives the Personnel Committee's written response.

On appeal, the Personnel Committee shall transmit the grievance, all grievance responses, and this Grievance Procedure to the Hearing Officer. As soon as is practicable thereafter, the Hearing Officer shall schedule a date for a hearing. The hearing shall be held at a mutually agreeable time in a public building and shall be open to the public unless the Hearing Officer otherwise directs.

B. Hearing Procedure.

The Hearing Officer shall have the authority to administer oaths and issue subpoenas at the request of the parties and shall be responsible for the fair and orderly conduct of the hearing and the preservation of the record. The hearing shall be conducted in accord with the hearing procedures of the American Arbitration Association. Any party requesting a subpoena from the Hearing Officer is responsible for the fees associated with the subpoena. All testimony shall be taken under oath and shall be recorded by a court reporter under the supervision and control of

the Hearing Officer, unless another method of recording is mutually agreed to by the parties and approved by the Hearing Officer. All costs associated with the court reporter and preparation of a transcript of the hearing shall be evenly split between the parties. The Hearing Officer may only overrule a disciplinary action if the action taken was arbitrary or capricious.

C. Hearing Officer Decision.

The Hearing Officer shall submit his or her decision affirming or reversing the action with the reasons therefore in writing to the Personnel Committee and the employee within thirty (30) calendar days of the close of the hearing or the submission of the parties' written briefs, if any, whichever is later, or on a later date mutually agreed upon by the parties.

V. City Council Review.

A. Appeal to City Council.

Step 5: Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date that the Hearing Officer's decision is mailed, either party may file with the City Council a written notice of appeal of the Hearing Officer's determination to the City Council. Any such appeal shall be on the written record, the preparation of which shall be the responsibility and at the cost of the party seeking the appeal. The appealing party shall supply a copy of the written record to the other party without charge. The written record shall be filed with the City Council within twenty (20) calendar days of the notice of appeal. No formal hearing shall be held before the City Council. The Council shall receive no further evidence on the matter but may request additional written submittals of the parties on matters which were raised before the Hearing Officer or, at its discretion, meet with the parties to review the matter. The City Council may retain outside counsel if necessary during the process.

B. City Council Decision.

Step 6: Within sixty (60) calendar days of the receipt of the written record, the City Council shall make and file its written decision with the Clerk's office. The Clerk or designee shall, within five (5) calendar days, mail a copy of the decision to the last known address of the employee or the employee's representative and provide a copy of the decision to the Personnel Committee. The Hearing Officer's determination may be affirmed, modified, or reversed by a majority vote of the City Council. The City Council's decision shall be final and binding on the parties. There shall be no subsequent right of appeal.

VI. Hearing Officer Selection.

A. Qualifications/Selection.

The City may contract with a Hearing Officer to hear and determine appeals at Step 4. Any Hearing Officer so engaged shall not be a City employee or receiving any compensation or benefits from the City other than those described below.

The City Clerk or designee shall create a panel of at least five (5) individuals when needed who have indicated a willingness to serve in the capacity of Hearing Officer and who are experienced in personnel matters and/or who are active or retired attorneys, retired members of the judiciary, retired administrative staff, or currently on the list of arbitrators or mediators for the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, or the American Arbitration Association. The Hearing Officer selected to hear a matter shall be selected by a random drawing of one out of the three names, with the parties present when the drawing takes place unless otherwise agreed upon. A “flip” of a coin shall determine which party draws the first name. The party winning the “flip” may choose to draw or defer the draw to the other party.

B. Compensation.

The Hearing Officer shall be compensated at the Hearing Officer’s regular rate for the hearing, travel time, and time spent preparing a written decision. The compensation for the Hearing Officer will be split evenly between the parties.

VII. Settlement of Grievance.

A grievance shall be considered waived if not filed or appealed within the designated grievance timelines. Dissatisfaction is implied in recourse from one step to the next step. A grievance shall be deemed settled and dismissed at the completion of any step in the grievance procedure if all parties concerned are mutually satisfied or the grievance has not been timely processed to the next level. All settlements shall be in writing and signed by the employee in question and the appropriate City official(s) involved at the step level that the grievance was settled.

VIII. Revisions/Updating.

This Policy may be revised, updated, or repealed by the City Council at any time.