

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, September 12, 2016 – 6:00 p.m.
Lincoln Center ~ 1519 Water Street

PRESENT: Chairman Slowinski; Alderpersons Johnson, Shorr, Morrow, Oberstadt

OTHERS

PRESENT: Mayor Wiza; C/T Ladick; City Attorney Beveridge; Clerk Moe; Alderperson(s) Ryan, Dugan, Phillips, Kneebone, Doxtator, McComb; Director(s) Lemke, Schrader; Chief Finn; Chief Skibba; Reid Rocheleau; Armin Nebel; Neil Prendergast; Tori Jennings; Brandi Makuski; Human Resource Manager Jakusz

Chairman Slowinski called the meeting to order.

1. Method for pay increases to pay rates for Crossing Guards and Seasonal employees

The memo included in the packet was reviewed. Alderperson Johnson moved to approve a process wherein the City Council approve affording Crossing Guards and Seasonal employees the same across-the-board increase that is afforded to the pay plan matrix; Alderperson Oberstadt seconded.

Ayes all, nays none. Motion carried.

2. Request from Chief Skibba to hire Police Officers in advance of retirements

Chief Skibba reviewed the content of his memo. He added that the Police and Fire Commission approved his request to hire two of the officers in November at their meeting last week. He reiterated that he believes his existing (2016) budget can absorb the cost of the new officers for the months of November and December.

Alderman Shorr stated that this is basically an effort to smooth things out as far as utilizing Field Training Officers for the training part of the process. Chief Skibba responded in the affirmative.

Alderperson Johnson stated that she feels this is a good practice and allows for continuity especially when you are at a point when you are losing so much institutional knowledge.

Alderman Morrow echoed Alderperson Johnson's sentiment.

Alderman Morrow moved to approve filling the two Police Officer positions in November of 2016 contingent upon Chief Skibba receiving letters of retirement from at least two of the retiring officers. Alderman Shorr seconded.

Alderman Kneebone stated that she is the City Council liaison to the Police and Fire Commission and she fully supports the approval of this request.

Ayes all, nays none. Motion carried.

3. Administrative Policy 3.02 – Leave of Absence (Page(s) 16 and 17 of Administrative Policy)

Chairman Slowinski stated that Alderman Johnson asked that this be brought forward for discussion.

Alderman Johnson stated that after the request last month from the Transit employee, and the robust conversation, she felt the policy unfair. She added that Marathon County doesn't have such a policy nor does Portage County. She also couldn't find a similar policy in Wisconsin Rapids. She feels that removing this section of the policy may create better morale.

Alderman Oberstadt voiced her opinion that elimination of this portion of the policy may not be fair to those employees who were there working during the employee's absence. She added that she doesn't feel the policy needs to be changed.

Human Resource Manager Jakusz stated that she found an old version of City Policies dating back to 1978 that included this provision so this policy is something that has been in existence in the City for quite a long period of time. She noted that by the time the employee has reached a leave of absence under this policy (i.e. leave without pay), they have exhausted their Federal FMLA benefit (12 weeks) and subsequently exhausted all of their accrued benefits. This policy protects the employee's job; the fact that they may have their anniversary date adjusted is likely a small matter in relation when considering their employment has been preserved.

She added there are two schools of thought on the matter; the employee that was there working during another's absence likely feels the policy is "fair" because they were at working during the absence of the employee. The employee's whose anniversary date is adjusted may feel it unfair, but will likely feel the City was generous in allowing them to take an extended leave of absence beyond what the law requires.

Director Lemke stated that the adjustment of the anniversary date has no bearing on the amount of vacation the employee accrues; it will adjust the date on which the employee receives their vacation benefit based on the amount of time they were away from work.

He added that this policy has the most effect in the Transit Division based on the bidding process used for route bidding every six months and more frequently in the event of a long-term leave or if someone leaves employment.

Chairman Slowinski stated that he feels the policy should remain as written and that it is fair to employees.

4. Adjournment – 6:21 p.m.