

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 10, 2018

The regular meeting of the Personnel Committee was called to order at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 10, 2018 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Moye, Rice and Ward, Administrator Tucker, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business. Councilmember Ward is temporary appointment to the Committee who will serve until the Special Election on February 13, 2018, and Administrator Tucker will chair the meetings until the new Councilmember joins the Committee.

1. Administrator Tucker called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 1, 2017 as submitted; Councilmember Ward seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

4. Old Business

A. Overview of Activities

Administrator Tucker stated that this item was placed on the Agenda to provide the Committee with information about the duties assigned to the Personnel Committee. She said that one (1) time consuming activity before the Committee each year was the recommendations to City Council of candidates to serve on boards and commissions. The process begins in August with an advertisement that states the number of seats for each board that will be open at the end of the year and a request for residents to submit applications. In September and October, the Committee members interview the applicants, and in November, the Committee compiles its recommendations for appointments or re-appointments to present to Council at the Special Meeting in December.

Other activities include making recommendations for changes in job descriptions or creating new job descriptions, which typically come to the Committee from a department manager through the City Administrator. The Committee also approves any changes or updates to the employee handbook and is involved in the budgeting process for General Government and the Building Department. The Committee is a strong resource for City Hall and for the City Administrator; it also provides assistance in setting the Administrator's personal goal each year.

B. Discussion of status of update to the Personnel Handbook

Part of the City's safety audit is the recommendation to submit the employee handbook for review by a labor attorney every five (5) years to insure that it complies with any new state and federal laws and with generally accepted policies and standards. The City's handbook has just undergone the legal review, and staff is now reviewing the draft and discussing any additional changes in City policy that need to be included. Once that process has been completed, the

revised handbook will come to the Personnel Committee for discussion, approval and recommendation for approval by City Council.

When Councilmember Moye asked how extensive the changes were that the attorney made, the Administrator stated that the number of changes was not significant.

C. Discussion of City's Education Reimbursement Policy

Administrator Tucker stated that the City offers an excellent benefit for employees that also benefits the City in its education reimbursement policy; the policy allows qualified employees who are in good standing to continue their education. The employee must front the money and is reimbursed by the City based on the grade attained in the course(s). The City's experience with this policy is that interest in it comes and goes; when interest rates were high, the participation was low, but, in the current economic conditions, more employees are participating. Human Resources Director Wynette DeGroot reported that twelve (12) employees are currently in the program. In order to properly budget for the program, participants are required to submit their requests in February for the coming fiscal year, and the budget assumes that everyone will do well and receive the maximum reimbursement. The policy also includes the circumstances under which a participant would be required to pay back the education reimbursement funds.

The Administrator opined that no changes have been made to this policy in approximately twenty (20) years, and it is being thoroughly analyzed as part of the current handbook review. One (1) part of the analysis is looking at the policies of other local governments in the state.

Responding to Councilmember Rice's question, the Administrator stated that the bulk of the City's participants were seeking undergraduate degrees; she also explained that students seeking graduate degrees are not reimbursed if their grade is a C because, typically, a grade below a B is considered failing in graduate school.

Councilmember Rice wanted her opinion that this is a "wonderful program" recorded in the minutes.

Councilmember Ward noted that the City Treasurer as a CPA must get forty (40) hours of continuing education each year and asked if the City paid for those courses, and he was told that the City does pay for them.

Assistant Frago added that this program has been a valuable recruitment tool for the City.

D. Continued Discussion of the Continuity Plan

Administrator Tucker emphasized that this plan was not a succession plan and that it was part of her 2017 goal to initiate the plan. She stated that the development of the plan is ongoing and asked that the Committee agree to have the continued development as a personal goal for her in 2018. In this plan, each department, along with its employees and hierarchy, is being evaluated to identify circumstances where there is no ability for the department or City to continue to operate if a particular employee is taken out of service for some reason, i.e. to identify areas where redundancy was needed but lacking. The City has many long-serving employees who have a

wealth of knowledge they have gained over the years that no one else has that they need to impart to another member of the department. The goal is to have redundancy in all departments and in all positions.

MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to have continued development of the continuity as the City Administrator's goal for 2018; Councilmember Moye seconded.

Councilmember Moye asked if the Administrator would have this singular focus for the year.

Administrator Tucker explained that one (1) category on the City Administrator's annual evaluation form is progress on a personal goal, and each year the Administrator has an identified personal goal, but it is not the only thing that she works on.

Councilmember Rice voiced concern over a delay in the decision that would result in the Administrator losing two (2) months' work on a goal to be achieved in twelve (12).

Councilmember Ward stated that he does not think the Administrator should be limited to only one (1) goal but that she should have several goals.

Councilmember Moye opined that some strong directional goals would come from the visioning meeting to be held in February so that the Committee should insure that the Administrator's personal goal was in-line with the goals of the City.

Councilmember Rice said that she thought the continuity plan was critical, particularly considering the department managers themselves.

Councilmember Ward suggested that the continuity plan be only one (1) of the City Administrator's goals for 2018.

The Administrator agreed that priorities might be established for her for 2018, but this personal goal of the continuity plan is the one (1) task on which she would be graded in the year-end evaluation. She also stated that she would be challenged to complete any goal with a shortened time frame in which to work.

Councilmember Moye expressed concern that he did not understand the criteria against which the Administrator would be judged in the evaluation; he thought the goal should be measurable.

Administrator Tucker said that the work product presented in 2018 would be measured against the document presented in 2017 to determine the level of progress made.

VOTE: The motion FAILED on a vote of 1 to 2 with Councilmembers Moye and Ward casting the dissenting votes.

The discussion concluded with Councilmember Moye re-stating his opinion that the goal should be more specific and more objectively measured.

5. New Business

Consideration of Veterans Day as holiday replacing floating holiday

The Administrator explained that, in addition to the list of identified holidays, the City has offered employees a floating holiday. A selection of other holidays, like Good Friday or Veterans Day, would be distributed to employees and department managers, and they would vote on which day they wanted to have as the floating holiday for that particular year. The day with the majority of votes and approved by this Committee and Council was selected. In years past, the selection was either Christmas Eve or the day after Christmas, but, in 2015, Christmas Eve was made an annual holiday. In discussing the floating holiday in this Committee last year, Director Page pointed out that one of the biggest Rec Department events, the Easter Egg Hunt, was held on the Saturday before Easter, i.e. the day after Good Friday, meaning that the department's staff would lose the floating holiday if Good Friday were selected. Director Pitts noted that the island's residents assume that, if Charleston County is closed for a holiday, then the City was closed as well; therefore, residents did not put their garbage out to be picked up which meant that the next day the Public Works Department would be overwhelmed with calls for special pickups. Since Charleston County does not observe Columbus Day as a holiday, the choice was Veterans Day. For the reasons stated above, staff is requesting that Veterans Day become a regular holiday for the City. Administrator Tucker pointed out that to do this would not add a holiday; it would simply replace the floating holiday with a specific day.

Clerk Copeland stated that the majority of City employees are in the Police and Fire Departments and work well-defined shift schedules, and, therefore, they do not vote on the floating holiday because it does not affect them.

MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to recommend to City Council that Veterans Day become an annual City holiday and that the floating holiday be eliminated; Councilmember Moye seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Miscellaneous Business

Councilmember Ward indicated that he would like the Committee to meet later in the day to make it more convenient for residents to attend.

Next Meeting Date: 4:00 p.m., Monday, February 12, 2018 in the Conference Room.

7. Executive Session – not needed

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 a.m.; Councilmember Moye seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:
Marie Copeland, City Clerk