

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 7, 2016

The regular meeting of the Personnel Committee was held at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 7, 2016 in the City Hal Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bettelli, Ferencz and Harrington, Administrator Tucker, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

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

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Councilmember Ferencz nominated Councilmember Harrington to serve as Committee Chair; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the vote was unanimous for Councilmember Harrington.

Councilmember Ferencz nominated Councilmember Bettelli to serve as Vice Chair; Chair Harrington seconded and the nomination was unanimously approved.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION Councilmember Ferencz moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 5, 2015 as submitted; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Citizens' Comments – None

5. Old Business – None

6. New Business

A. Discussion of Temporary Employees

According to Administrator Tucker, this item is on the *Agenda* because some Councilmembers were surprised to learn that, following Council's instructions, full-time City employees in good standing at June 30, 2015 were awarded a one-time bonus of seven hundred dollars (\$700), the temporary employees who ride on the back of the garbage trucks were not included. The persons who do that job are employees of Staff Zone with whom the City contracts for temporary labor; they receive no remuneration from the City.

Councilmember Ferencz said that she had initiated this discussion and has talked with Director Pitts regarding the five (5) guys who are on the truck and do such hard work; she voiced her understanding that one (1) of these men has worked for the City for about twenty years (20 yrs.). She explained that she believes there must be a mechanism whereby these men could be rewarded for their work to the City.

Director Pitts explained that the City's relationship with Staff Zone is one (1) where he gets a contract from them every day asking for the number of laborers he will need for the next day; in normal operations, he typically brings in five or six (5-6), but, in the summer, he might have

eight (8) workers for certain days of the week. Director Pitts stated that he does not select the men to come back, but, for reasons the he can only surmise, Staff Zone sends certain men back day after day to the Isle of Palms. The Director refers to them as "repeat tickets", and they typically work forty hours (40 hrs.) per week; the average years of service to the City through Staff Zone for the "repeat tickets" is ten to eleven (10-11 yrs.) years to one year (1 yr.). Periodically the Staff Zone representative will contact Director Pitts to check on his level of satisfaction with their personnel; on the other hand, if the Director finds that one (1) of the men is not working out, he can stop his pay and contact Staff Zone to bring someone else until he is satisfied.

Since the City only has garbage pickup two (2) days a week in the off-season, Chair Harrington asked how the contract employees would get forty hours (40 hrs.) per week. On the days they are not on the truck, they might be involved with debris removal or picking up miscellaneous debris; when the drivers leave, they are moved from place to place to do jobs like right-of-way maintenance. The two (2) long trucks are assigned to the long routes and have two (2) Staff Zone employees; the other trucks have one (1) Staff Zone employee.

The man who has worked on the island for Staff Zone the longest is well-known on the island, and is referred to as "Blue." Director Pitts informed the Committee that he has twice been offered a full-time position in the Public Works Department and has twice declined the offer.

When asked whether Staff Zone has a merit or award system that the City could tie into, the Director replied that he did not know.

Councilmember Bettelli said that the jobs these men have through Staff Zone is the one (1) they have chosen, and, although referred to as temporary employees, they are actually contract employees hired by Staff Zone and selected by Staff Zone to work at the Isle of Palms.

Councilmember Ferencz acknowledged that everything Councilmember Bettelli said was true, but she reiterated her desire for the City to find some way for the City to reward their hard work. For Council to take the "overt position" that they were rewarding hard work with the one-time employee bonus, she was searching for a way to do the same for these five (5) men.

Councilmember Bettelli noted that the Recreation Department has some long time part-time/temporary people who are instructors and receive a paycheck like employees.

According to the Administrator, these people did not meet the criteria established by Council to receive the employee bonus also.

Councilmember Ferencz said that she was not intending to include these men in the same category as the employee bonus, but requested that "the City look into some way that ... these five (5) men that on a day-to-day basis do the hard work for this City and reward them some way." She continued that "if we [Council] are saying that the City is recognizing hard work in a year that it was particularly hard to do over the summer season, then [she] would like to see some way to do something for these men."

Administrator Tucker added that, if the City were to find some way to reward these Staff Zone employees by a contribution from the City, other long-term temporary/part-time employees should be considered as well.

At the least, Councilmember Ferencz indicated that she would like to see these five (5) men recognized in a Council meeting or private funds collected to reward them.

Councilmember Bettelli stated that, during the holidays, he and many others in the community put some cash in the hands of the driver and the guy who loads the truck for doing a good job.

Recreation Director Page commented that she did not want to say anything against Director Pitts' men because she agrees that they work hard. But the Recreation Department has a lot of part-time employees that work under thirty (30) hours per week, but have been affiliated with the Department for a long time – one (1) instructor's employment pre-dates Director Page and several have been with the City fifteen (15) or more years. According to the Director, none of these part-time employees are included in the Christmas grocery gift-card program or any other perks other employees receive. If a way to reward the Public Works' contract employees were to be found, she would feel badly for those employees who work nearly thirty (30) hours per week in the Recreation Department.

"As the working supervisor of Public Works," Director Pitts stated that he wanted to protect the Staff Zone employees, "but, as the department head looking out for the City," anything done "must be fair across the board," i.e. done for everyone. He added his personal opinion was to do nothing for these five (5) men.

The Administrator explained that the reason the City opts to use Staff Zone or any other temp agency is because of the seasonal need for additional people; if someone is an employee, the City must keep them busy twelve (12) months a year.

Director Pitts noted that he has more flexibility when using contract workers; he reported that, if one (1) of the guys from Staff Zone has an appointment on a Thursday or Friday, often he will ask that no replacement be sent. When the busy time comes in the summer and the Director needs additional people, he has saved up a quantity of days that allows the Director to bring in ten (10) guys without going over budget.

Chair Harrington asked whether there was a way to recognize long-term part-time temporary or contract workers that would be meaningful but not in a monetary way.

Director Pitts suggested including these deserving people in next year's budget for the grocery gift cards; he added that for residents to verbally acknowledge them and thank them when they are working the routes would be much appreciated – they make a point to relate these instances to the Director.

When asked if the City could include them in the gift-card, Administrator Tucker responded that expanding the number for next year could be investigated; the only issue that could be problematic is that the City recently learned that the value must be taxed as income.

The Administrator informed the Committee that the amount in the FY16 budget for temporary labor in the Public Works Department is one hundred seventy-one thousand seven hundred eighty-five dollars (\$171,785).

On the subject of the gift cards, the Administrator suggested that additional money could be budgeted for gift cards in each Department, and the distribution of the additional cards would be at the Department Manager's discretion.

Councilmember Bettelli suggested that this topic should be vetted by the Ways and Means Committee.

Administrator Tucker advised the Committee that, after the generous bonuses were paid to employees, the City Attorney, in other research, found that there is an Attorney General's opinion that municipal employees should not receive bonuses.

B. Discussion of 2016 Holidays

Chair Harrington noted that minutes from March Personnel Committee meetings were included in the meeting packets to remind the Committee of the discussions that took place when the decision was made to give City employees two (2) additional holidays.

Administrator Tucker stated that this discussion was the reason that all Department Managers, except Chief Buckhannon, were attending the meeting to opine on this subject. The final decision was to add two (2) new holidays, Christmas Eve and a new floating holiday to be declared by each individual employee annually; the decision was made because one (1) member of Council was adamant that citizens were deprived of services when the City offices were closed. The Administrator reported that every Department Manager of the City would rather have another declared holiday when the City is closed, but essential services would still be provided. Having a floating holiday for each employee's choice makes managing employees and departments much harder. At the request of Department Managers, the subject is submitted for re-consideration. The Administrator noted that the island's residents believe the City offices are closed whenever Charleston County and other local governments take a holiday, resulting in no demand for City services. Suggestions for a declared holiday are President's Day (February), Veterans Day (November) and Columbus Day (October).

Director Page said that anytime one (1) member of her department cannot come to work – sick, annual leave or a day off, there is a burden on the department to cover that person's job responsibilities that must be done. A holiday is defined as a day when everything is shutdown or closed; as the 2016 holidays are structured now, the floating holiday is just another day off. On a personal note, the Director reported that she finds it difficult to take the annual leave she earns every year because there is always a lot to do and a lot going on at the Recreation Center. On a holiday, she indicated that she did not feel guilty and could truly relax.

Speaking for emergency services, Captain Usry noted that, technically, they have only six (6) months, October through April, in which they can take annual leave because they should not take annual leave during the busy season. This new floating holiday also makes scheduling shifts more difficult; whereas they function as usual when the City has a holiday.

Replying to Councilmember Ferencz' inquiry, the Administrator stated that public safety personnel are paid double time when they work a holiday and reminded the Committee that the total estimated cost to the City for a declared holiday before June 30, 2016 was approximately ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

From the Public Works perspective, declared holidays are better; Director Pitts explained that, when residents see that Charleston County or the State or Mount Pleasant is taking a holiday, they assume the City is also and do not put their garbage out for collection. This results in many calls for special pickups in the following days, especially when garbage collection is once a week.

Chair Harrington stated that the Department Managers had provided sufficient justification to recommend to Council that the new floating holiday become a declared holiday, and he would recommend that day be President's Day.

When asked whether employees preferred a designated holiday or an individual holiday of choice, all Department Managers responded that their employees favored a designated holiday. With this information, Councilmember Ferencz indicated that she would support a designated holiday.

MOTION: Chair Harrington moved to recommend to Ways and Means that Presidents Day become a designated holiday in lieu of the personal day of choice; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. City Administrator's 2015 Performance Evaluation

The approved evaluation form for 2015 for the City Administrator was included in the meeting packet; one (1) of the items listed is the Administrator's personal goal, and she is in the process of quantifying the meeting of that goal to be sent to Councilmembers. The Administrator recommended that the evaluation form be sent to Councilmembers who were carried over from 2015 with a deadline to be returned to the Personnel Committee Chair. In addition, at a subsequent meeting, the Committee needs to discuss the Administrator's personal goal for 2016.

On the subject of the Administrator's 2016 goal, Administrator Tucker said that she would like for the Committee to establish a list of suggested goals upon which the balance of Council would make the final decision.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Captain Usry announced that Detective Sergeant Swain has been promoted to the position of Captain of Support Services.

Next Meeting Date: 10:00 a.m., Thursday, February 4, 2016 in the Conference Room

8. **Executive Session** – not necessary

9. **Adjourn**

MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:07 a.m.;
Councilmember seconded and the motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk

DRAFT