

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

5:30 p.m., Thursday, January 15, 2009

The regular meeting of the Personnel Committee was held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 15, 2009 in Council Chambers of City Hall located at 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Chairman Piening, Council members Loftus and Taylor, City Administrator Tucker, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland.

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

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Councilman Taylor nominated Councilman Piening as Chairman for another year, Councilman Loftus as Vice Chair and moved that the nominations be closed. The nominations were seconded by Councilmen Loftus and Piening, respectively; the vote was unanimous.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 13, 2008 as submitted; Chairman Piening seconded and the motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

4. Old Business – None

5. New Business

A. Set Floating Holiday for 2009

Based on the employee survey taken in December, 2008, the employee preference for designation of the 2009 floating holiday was Thursday, December 24, 2009.

MOTION: Chairman Piening moved to designate Thursday, December 24, 2009 as the official floating holiday for 2009; Councilman Taylor seconded and the motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

B. Discussion of meeting attendance requirements

Chairman Piening stated that he did not think that there was any mention in the City Code establishing parameters for attendance at meetings of commissions and boards. Administrator Tucker commented that she had asked the City Clerk to assemble all of the information available relative to meeting attendance, and the results were that only

the Planning Commission directly addressed attendance at meetings in its Rules of Procedure. She also noted that there had been fines of \$75.00 for Council members and \$300 for the mayor for unexcused absences; the fines were removed with the recent re-codification of the City Code.

Councilman Loftus questioned what could be done with a committee member who might miss sixty percent (60%) of the committee's meetings, but the absences were not consecutive. Councilman Taylor responded that the term "adequate reason," which appears in the Planning Commission Rules for the Committee Chair to recommend to Council that they take action. Councilman Taylor added that he did not believe that there had been an instance of a Committee member shirking his/her responsibility by not attending meetings.

The Committee decided not to take any action at present and to monitor attendance at meetings to determine if action should be taken in the future.

C. Recommendation for Employee of the Month

Chairman Piening commented that Lieutenant Wright had proposed PFC Gerardo Chavez as Employee of the Month due to his efforts that likely saved the life of a young woman who had attempted suicide.

MOTION; Chairman Piening moved to approve PFC Gerardo Chavez as the January Employee of the Month; Councilman Taylor seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. Employee Suggestions – None

6. Miscellaneous

Councilman Taylor reminded the Committee members of the Committee that they had discussed changing the way City employees were awarded increases, i.e. going from a merit and cost of living increase to a "pay for performance" method.

Councilman Loftus expressed his strong support for such a change because he believed "pay for performance" was a true motivator that was not present with the present system. He remarked that a "pay for performance" system gave the department managers more flexibility.

Councilman Loftus explained the way he envisioned the plan working as one where

- (1) City Council would determine the total dollars to be allowed for salary increases;

- (2) The staff would determine percentage of the total “pot” for each department; and
- (3) Each department manager would rank his/her employees from top to bottom and base increases on the ranking.

Councilman Taylor noted that the Committee must devise a performance evaluator that could be used universally by all departments. He asked that Councilman Loftus do the necessary research based on his familiarity with the process.

Administrator Tucker stated that to implement any change would be very difficult for the 2009-2010 budget year. Chairman Piening commented that the change being discussed would be a major one and should not be rushed.

The Committee agreed to a date of October 1, 2009 to have the “pay for performance” plan created, leaving three (3) months to review the plan with department managers, who will, in turn, will explain the plan to their employees.

Councilman Loftus related to the Committee that he had a conversation with an employee at the Christmas party who asked the Councilman why the City never fired anyone. Councilman Loftus asked the Administrator how employees could have such a perception. Administrator Tucker answered that the City was actually fairly rigid because the managers believe that the employees are representatives of the City and the City Council in the community. She did note that there have been occasions when employees were allowed to resign, instead of firing. Whatever the case, these matters are not discussed with other employees, so they will have no idea what has occurred – all efforts are taken to avoid internal gossip. When the Administrator believes that an employee must be fired, she explained that the City had a law firm that specializes in labor relations whom she consults before taking any action.

Administrator Tucker continued that, when it is believed that the employee is worth the extra effort and the infraction is not a major one, actions are taken to work with that employee. There may be a demotion for lack of performance with a reduction in pay, and the employee may be placed in some kind of therapy or recovery process.

Councilman Taylor complimented Administrator Tucker in the manner in which she has handled terminations in the past, i.e. she has kept the members of Council informed and has taken all necessary steps to protect the City while keeping the cost of turnover in mind. He suggested that Councilman Loftus spend time with the Administrator to review the paperwork and processes involved.

Next Meeting Date: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 3, 2009.

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to go into Executive Session at 6:25 p.m. to discuss personnel matters; Chairman Piening seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Personnel Committee returned to regular session at 6:34 p.m.; Chairman Piening reported that no action and no votes had been taken in Executive Session.

4. MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m.; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk