TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MINUTES Mazza Meeting Room

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

Committee
Present: Nancy Weissler, Chairman; Leslie Moriarty, Jill Oberlander, William Drake
(arrived 10:10)

Staff: Ben Branyan, Town Administrator; Melissa Jones, Senior Business Analyst; Mary
Pepe, Director Human Resources; Amy Siebert, Commissioner DPW

Board: Leslie Tarkington, Mary Lee Kiernan

Other: Robert Stacy, BOE Director of Human Resources; Gina Williams, Assistant
Director, Human Resources; Jennifer Dayton, BOE Member; Allen Brown,
Executive Director, Nathaniel Witherell; Laurence Simon, Chair, Nathaniel
Witherell Board

RTM: Lucia Jansen, RTM Member, BOC

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 A.M.

Ms. Weissler welcomed the HR Committee and attendees.

1. **Approval of BET HR Committee Meeting Minutes February 9, 2016**

   Upon a motion by Ms. Weissler, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, the Committee voted 3-0 to approve the Minutes of the February 9, 2016, Regular Human Resources Committee Meeting. (Absent for vote: Drake)

2. **Review and vote on M&C Salary Increase for 2016-2017**

Ms. Weissler reminded Committee members that fiscal 2016 M&C salaries total $6,736,000 so an increase of 2.5% would represent an increase of approximately $168,000. Ms. Moriarty noted that in deciding on the appropriate increase in the M&C salary pool, the Committee may want to take into account the following: 1) most unions are receiving GWI and step increases in excess of 2.5%; 2) there is some compression between some union employees and M&C employees in the lower-ranked categories; and 3) M&C employees should be rewarded for performing at their highest level. Ms. Weissler noted that she thought the following factors were relevant to the decision: 1) the CPI for NY/NJ Urban Wage Consumers was only 0.7% for the 12 months ending December; 2) the Buck Study, completed 3 years ago, showed that M&C employees' salaries were much higher than their municipal peers and in line with the corporate sector; and 3) Budget Guidelines called for a 2% increase in operating budgets. Ms. Oberlander asked if M&C reviews included 360's (i.e., feedback from subordinates and peers). Ms. Pepe indicated that that wasn't the practice but it could be considered. However, with some small departments and appointment authorities, she noted that it could be difficult to execute. In light of the compression issues and HR's view that salaries for some union positions exceed
market levels, Ms. Weissler suggested it may be advisable for the Town to undertake a study of salaries and benefits for selected positions.

Upon a motion by Ms. Weissler, seconded by Mr. Drake, the Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the BET an increase of 2.5% in the M&C compensation pool for 2016-2017.

Upon a motion by Ms. Weissler, seconded by Mr. Drake, the Committee voted 4-0 to approve the recommended breakdown of the 2.5% into a base increase of 1.5% and a High Performance increase of either 0.5% or 1.0% based on HR’s criteria.

3. Review of proposed new positions for fiscal 2017

Board of Education – The salary schedules in the First Selectman’s budget book had indicated that for non-certified staff, part-time positions were expected to increase by 4.3 FTE’s at the BOE and by 0.9 FTE’s at the School Lunch Fund. Mr. Stacy reported that there were errors in those schedules and that for the School Lunch Fund, there is actually a decrease of 0.4 FTE’s. As for non-certified BOE positions, the only real change occurred when the BOE hired a part-time administrative assistant (0.7 FTE) for Mr. Dunn, when he joined the Cabinet as the District’s Chief Information Officer. Mr. Stacy noted that this change had been made to address the administrative demands on Mr. Dunn’s time as a result of the district wide rollout of Digital Learning, which entailed overseeing the purchases of the devices and training the staff. Ms. Weissler emphasized that in the future, the Committee needed to know about staff changes before they occurred rather than after the fact. In response to Ms. Oberlander’s question about the level of administrative staffing over time, Mr. Stacy indicated that there had been reductions and that the BOE was focusing on minimizing any additions to non-classroom staff. In light of the fact that the BOE’s fiscal 2016 actual headcount includes the administrative assistant position, the Committee did not take any action.

Nathaniel Witherell – The approved fiscal 2016 budget included the capital for the 5-bed expansion of the rehab unit, which had been scheduled to open mid-year, and about $320,000 for incremental staffing and services for the rehab unit. However, it is now anticipated that the rehab unit expansion will be completed by July. With the exception of addition of the full-time admissions staff member (included in the fiscal 2016 and 2017 TOO) to serve both the long-term and rehab units, Nathaniel Witherell has revised its staffing needs for the expansion of the rehab unit from 5.5 FTE’s a year ago (which was not included in the TOO) to 3.7 FTE’s in the fiscal 2017 budget. As for the requested 2.2 FTE’s for nursing, this is to include additional part-time hours for RN’s and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA’s).

As for the additional FTE part-time hours for the long-term and rehab units, this is principally driven by plan to cover open shifts in nursing, laundry and housekeeping with additional part-time staff rather than pay a premium for overtime for existing staff. Nathaniel Witherell’s overtime has exceeded budget by $100,000 for the first six months of fiscal 2016. Nathaniel Witherell’s staffing plan does not assume any increase in the census for the long-term unit from projected 2016 levels.

The Committee had an extensive discussion of Nathaniel Witherell’s request. Ms. Oberlander raised the question of what incentive Nathaniel Witherell has as a Town-owned facility to manage its staffing levels to control costs while still providing good quality care. Mr. Brown stated that Nathaniel Witherell’s staffing ratios are considerably lower than other five-star rated
facilities. However, he acknowledged that the Town’s generous benefits resulted in much higher staffing costs versus its peers. Ms. Moriarty questioned whether the move to increase part-time hours and decrease overtime would decrease the flexibility Nathaniel Witherell has in staffing. Mr. Alexander acknowledged that could be a consequence but that overall the facility’s operating costs should benefit by trying to schedule part-time staff to fill in for necessary shifts.

The Committee also discussed a number of the challenges facing Nathaniel Witherell. Although the plan is to increase part-time hours, Mr. Brown noted that it could be difficult to do so because many part-time staff members had other jobs and because of the facility’s suburban location. In response to a question from Ms. Weissler, Mr. Brown noted that in some instances, Nathaniel Witherell accepts Greenwich residents at its rehab unit even though it knows in advance that it will lose money on them because their care costs exceed the Medicare reimbursement. He indicated that there are about 10-15 admissions out of a total of 500 admissions per year that fall into this category.

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Oberlander, the Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the BET that it retain the increase in part-time positions of 8.2 FTE’s (and the associated increase in the temporary salaries line item) in the budget.

Committee members noted that that many of the strategic issues that had been discussed were beyond the scope of the budget review and would best be taken up as part of a more in-depth review of Nathaniel Witherell.

Upon a motion by Ms. Weissler, seconded by Mr. Drake, the Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the BET that it undertake a long-term strategic review of Nathaniel Witherell.

DPW: Custodian – At its February 9th meeting, the Committee had had an extensive discussion with Ms. Siebert about her request for a custodian to maintain the new Central Fire Station. The Committee noted that Ms. Siebert had made a convincing case for the new position, funding for which would come from DPW’s reduction in temporary and part-time hours and from the benefits savings resulting from the elimination of the Employee Assistance Program coordinator position.

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Weissler, the Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the BET that the custodian position be retained in the budget.

7. Items Scheduled for Future Discussion

- BOE: Exit Interview Process and Turnover Rates
- CIRMA report

8. Adjournment

The Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 12:00 P.M.

The next regular Human Resource Committee meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2016 in the Cone Room.

BET HR Committee Meeting Minutes February 16, 2016 – Approved
Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

[Signature]

Nancy Weissler, HR Committee Chairman