

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

Tuesday, May 10, 2016

Committee

Present: Nancy Weissler, Chairman; Leslie Moriarty, Jill Oberlander,
William Drake

Selectmen: Peter Tesei, First Selectman

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Mary Pepe, Director Human Resources; Erica Mahoney, Assistant Director of Human Resources; Alison Graham, Employee Benefits Manager; Ben Branyan, Town Administrator; Melissa Brown, Senior Business Analyst; Al Cava, Director of Labor Relations

Board: Michael Mason, Chairman BET; Mary Lee Kiernan, Elizabeth K. Krumeich, Jeffrey Ramer, Leslie Tarkington

Other: Jennifer Dayton, BOE Member; Dan Ozizmir, RTM Member

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 P.M.

Ms. Weissler welcomed the HR Committee and attendees.

1. Approval of BET HR Committee Meeting Minutes April 12, 2016

Upon a motion by Ms. Weissler, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, the Committee voted 3-0 to approve the Minutes of the April 12, 2016, Regular Human Resources Committee Meeting. (Drake arrived 3:10 P.M.)

2. April 2016 HR Reports

● **Workers' Compensation Incident and Expense Reports** – The Committee concurred that Ms. Navarro's new expanded report, which was presented at the March meeting, would now be presented quarterly.

Mr. Mynarski reported that Workers' Compensation expense year-to-date was trending well; with 44 weeks experience in the current fiscal year, he estimated a projected surplus of approximately \$500,000.

● **Vacant and Posted Positions** – Ms. Pepe reviewed the Vacant Position listings, describing the Police recruitment qualification process consisting of a written exam scheduled for June 11, followed by the top-scoring 65 candidates being selected for an oral exam and concluding with an interview by a panel of police officers from other municipalities. The hiring process would then include a psychological test, background check and polygraph test. In response to a question from Ms. Oberlander regarding recruitment of "protected classes", Ms. Pepe replied that the initial qualification testing was "blind" and only upon meeting with the Police Interview

Panel would “protected class” status become known. She noted that candidates could be disqualified as a result of the psychological or polygraph testing.

Ms. Mahoney commented that a conditional offer had been extended to a candidate for the Tech Solutions Specialist position.

3. Labor Contract Update

Mr. Cava provided the Committee with a schedule of upcoming labor contract negotiations for the various bargaining units. He updated the Committee on the schedule for the Firefighter contract arbitration, indicating that three hearings had taken place since the contract expired in June 2015 and that four more would take place, possibly by the end of the calendar year. Mr. Mynarski indicated that the Town has accrued for the financial impact of the arbitration.

Mr. Cava gave an overview of retirement and health care benefits provided in the Town’s contracts. He noted that although Fire still provides for a defined benefit plan, it had moved to a less generous Tier 2 plan in the most recent contract, which yielded a 6% savings vs. Tier 1. The Tier 2 plan is comparable to benefit plans provided by other localities. He indicated that the following fire departments have switched to a defined contribution plan: Fairfield, Ridgefield, Stratford, and Westport. Whereas Fire is still on a point-of-service health care plan, the rest of the Town is on the High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). Mr. Cava indicated that the Town provides a more generous subsidy of the deductible for the HDHP—63% vs. an average of 50% for its peer municipalities. Other health care options that the Town could consider include a defined contribution approach, which is gaining ground in the corporate sector, and the Connecticut Partnership Plan. Mr. Cava indicated there is a current opportunity for lowering costs with the Partnership Plan, but didn't know if it would last over the long term. He indicated that the Plan has recently been amended to allow municipalities to opt out without a penalty if the State significantly changes the benefits or cost. Mr. Mason asked that a list of actual benefits be prepared so that employees and bargaining units understood an employee’s total compensation.

Mr. Cava commented that he was negotiating contracts with end dates of 2019 because the Cadillac Tax is still scheduled to become effective in 2020. He discussed wage settlement trends for Connecticut. In general, he was seeing 2.25% for Fire (GWI only) and 1.6% (GWI) and 3% (with step) for teachers. Ms. Moriarty asked why settlements were in the 2-3% range when inflation was much lower. Mr. Cava noted that the arbitration process in Connecticut is favorable to unions and that arbitrators heavily weigh recent wage settlements in their decisions. Mr. Tesei noted the need for advocacy efforts to improve the arbitration process and to promote greater awareness that wage settlements significantly in excess of inflation are not sustainable. Mr. Tesei noted that unfunded mandates imposed by the State also contribute to cost pressures. He suggested that it would be helpful if the BET and RTM were to agree on a directive to the First Selectman’s office that would highlight these fiscal challenges. Mr. Drake and Ms. Moriarty agreed to take the lead on this project on behalf of the HR Committee.

Mr. Ozizmir presented some data that the private sector is able to offset wage increases in the private sector in excess of inflation with productivity gains; he suggested that the Town should similarly pursue opportunities to improve productivity. Committee members discussed the challenges of measuring and improving productivity in the municipal sector, but would consider how it may be applicable to the Town.

4. Executive Session: Labor contract strategy update

Executive Session

Ms. Weissler called for an Executive Session to discuss contract strategy at 4:13 P.M.

Upon a motion by Ms. Weissler, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, the Committee voted 4-0 to enter Executive Session at 4:13 P.M.

The Committee exited Executive Session at 4:47 P.M.

The Committee voted 4-0 to end the Executive Session at 4:47 P.M.

5. Overview and monthly update on health care insurance

Ms. Graham provided a calendar year chart that showed how the Town's current Minimum Premium Actual Claims were trending against its Bank Account Liability. She pointed out that as of April, the account had a favorable balance of \$821,217, but reminded the Committee that employees typically were paying their deductible in the first 3-6 months of a benefit year.

Responses to TOG's RFP for a health insurance broker/consultant have been received, and interviews of the finalists have been scheduled. She also presented a comparison of the Town's health benefit plans with four other Fairfield County municipalities insured by CIGNA. This highlighted differences in coverage. For example, only one other municipality in addition to Greenwich offers unlimited outpatient private duty nursing.

6. Items for Future Discussion

- Update on revenue being generated by Police scheduler position (July)
- Work Environment Training – issues/compliance/policy (June)
- M&C Evaluation and Compensation (July)

7. Adjournment

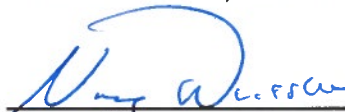
Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Oberlander, the Committee voted 4-0 to adjourn at 5:01 P.M.

The next regular Human Resource Committee meeting is scheduled for June 6, 2016 at 3:00 P.M. in the Cone Room.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



Nancy Weissler, HR Committee Chairman