

MINUTES

Approved 6/13/07

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MAY 9, 2007 3:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: J. Dennis, Chair; M. Sigler; L. McBean-Clairborne; D. Kiefer

Excused: G. Stevenson

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; S. Moore, Deputy County Administrator; K. Leinthall, Probation and Community Justice Director; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; M. Pottorff, Chief Deputy Clerk

Guests: C. DeMarco, Mental Health Department and CSEA White Collar Representative

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Chair's Report

Mr. Dennis reported that labor negotiations with the Sheriff's Department are ongoing. A proposal from the County's negotiating team was sent out to the union and their negotiator, but the negotiating team has not heard back from them yet. The two teams have met once, and have a meeting scheduled for May.

Ms. Kiefer asked for an update on CANARx. Ms. Fitzpatrick said a policy adopted by the Legislature would be necessary; however, she would need a legal opinion first as the FDA does not approve of CANARx. TC3 began their program in September 2006 and now have six months of utilization. Mr. Boden, the County's health insurance representative, is currently looking at that information; however, the utilization of the program at TC3 has been very low. Ms. Kiefer supported pursuing this further and suggested looking at other counties who are participating in the program as mentioned by Ms. Fitzpatrick. Mr. Dennis said if it is not going to cost the County anything, then he would support pursuing this as well. *Ms. Fitzpatrick agreed to obtain an opinion from the County Attorney and County Administrator on the process and will come back to the Committee at the next meeting.*

Ms. Kiefer also requested an update on the tobacco-free zones.

Red-Circled Positions

Resolution

Mr. Dennis said a resolution was approved by the Committee in January; however, further discussion was recommended and therefore this topic has come back to the Committee. He distributed salary information from other counties for the positions of Psychiatrists and Medical Directors.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said a request was made by Ms. Kiefer to have the report of 2004 relating to salary information for these positions updated. In addition, Ms. Fitzpatrick put together other information as requested by Ms. Kiefer and will make it available to other Committee members upon request. At this

time the salary information from other counties was reviewed. Ms. Kiefer noted that having the population of the counties would be helpful. Ms. Fitzpatrick said if there is additional information or specific data Committee members wished to have to let her know. It was noted that in the chart pertaining to salary information from other counties that the responsibilities and qualifications may vary in the Medical Director positions from county to county. In addition, some counties contract out services.

Ms. Kiefer questioned whether there would be a cost savings to contracting out some of the services. Ms. Fitzpatrick said the Mental Health Commissioner would need to address the question. Ms. Kiefer said to help contain taxpayer costs, she does not want the salary amounts of such high-paid positions to escalate at as high a percentage as lower paid County employees. She would like to consider a long-term approach and look at a different model while acknowledging the good service for County residents and saving some money at the same time.

Mr. Dennis believes the County should also be looking into the future for setting salaries for these individuals and when they decide to leave County employment a market analysis at that time could be done. He commented that there currently exists stability and continuity and that the County is getting a "good deal".

Mr. Sigler said he finds the salary information from other counties helpful.

Ms. Fitzpatrick again said that the justification to have full-time staff was that contracting out the service(s) can impair the quality of care and lead to inconsistency of care because of the flexibility needed. She said that currently the Child Psychiatrist position is contracted out at \$120-\$130 per hour.

It was MOVED by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, seconded by Mr. Sigler, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval. Ms. Kiefer said the one question that continues to come up is whether the salaries are established annually or not. She referenced the minutes from the last meeting and understands that a decision should be made by a certain date each year and that the formula be determined from year to year. She asked if Committee members considered other formulas and hoped that she could work with others to brainstorm possibilities. Mr. Dennis disagreed. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne understands Ms. Kiefer's comments, but believes many of the formulas have been reviewed over the years and that a decision needs to be made.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne offered and the Committee unanimously agreed to add an effective date of January 1, 2008 in the first Resolved.

Ms. Kiefer asked if the Committee would consider adding higher levels to the County's salary schedule to accommodate these positions. Ms. Fitzpatrick said there are not enough points in the system to allow that to happen. Ms. Kiefer thought points for specific professional credentials could be added.

Following further discussion, a voice vote resulted as follows on the resolution: Ayes – 3 (Dennis, Sigler, and McBean-Clairborne); Noes – 1 (Kiefer); Excused – 1 (Stevenson). RESOLUTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZING EQUAL BENEFITS AND SALARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS WITH SALARIES SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY THE LEGISLATURE TO BE ABOVE THE ASSIGNED GRADE

WHEREAS, the "Point-Factor Rating System" that is applied to all job descriptions and utilized by Tompkins County to assign labor grades and corresponding salaries to all titles is unable to reflect the market-rate salaries of certain highly specialized professional positions, and

WHEREAS, by prior resolution of the Legislature, incumbents in the titles of Psychiatrist, Medical Director – Mental Health, and Deputy County Attorney have been assigned salaries at a rate above that provided in the Management salary schedule, and

WHEREAS, salary increases for all management titles, except those mentioned above, are included in, and authorized by, one annual resolution of the Legislature, and

WHEREAS, the fringe benefits and annual salary increase for incumbents in the three titles mentioned above should be equivalent to the increases and benefits provided to all other management staff, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Personnel Committee, That effective January 1, 2008, incumbents in the titles of Psychiatrist, Medical Director – Mental Health, and Deputy County Attorney, will be eligible to receive the same fringe benefits and will receive the same annual salary adjustments as those provided to other management staff without requiring a separate resolution of the Legislature,

RESOLVED, further, That currently there is stability with the individuals in these positions, however, should a vacancy occur and recruitment is necessary the appropriate program committee will look at CPI and market analysis,

RESOLVED, further, That effective immediately, whenever there is a vacancy in one of these titles, a base salary will be set for the newly hired incumbent on an individual basis by a resolution of the Legislature.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Confidential Employees

Resolution

It was MOVED by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, seconded by Mr. Sigler, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval.

Ms. Kiefer stated that she is very sympathetic that the Confidential employees want to track white-collar employees, but it is unfortunate for the County as a whole to give up the possibility of arriving at an approved settlement if there is a white-collar impasse. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that in the past it has had a reverse effect with lower salaries being established for Confidential and Management positions.

A voice vote resulted as follows on the resolution: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Stevenson).
RESOLUTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. - ESTABLISHING SALARIES AND BENEFITS FOR POSITIONS DESIGNATED AS CONFIDENTIAL

WHEREAS, the Confidential employees are a core group of administrative professionals responsible for supporting central administrative functions and by law cannot be part of a collective bargaining unit, and

WHEREAS, in the past, benefits for Confidential employees have been established by Administrative Policy 03-01, and salaries established on an annual basis by resolution of the Legislature, and

WHEREAS, for purposes of parity, it would be practical to adopt a policy that would reflect the current practice of having salaries for Confidential employees parallel to White Collar employees, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Personnel Committee, That salaries for Confidential employees shall continue to parallel White Collar salaries, and that annual salary increases and benefits for employees designated as Confidential shall be imposed at the same level in all aspects, as those negotiated by the White Collar bargaining unit,

RESOLVED, further, That this resolution takes effect on January 1, 2008.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Ms. Kiefer asked if the Committee was going to discuss and review the overall pay equity schedule. Committee members expressed interest to begin looking at the system.

Committee Goals

At this time the Committee reviewed the five proposed goals. Mr. Sigler thought the Committee agreed to look at staffing levels and that it would be a goal or part of a goal. It is anticipated that there will be a number of retirements over the next ten years and he would like to see a reduction in the number of people working at the County. Ms. Martel Moore believed it was part of succession planning and will be included in the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee's action plan. *Mr. Dennis asked if Mr. Sigler would be willing to put together a proposal for the Committee to consider. Mr. Sigler agreed if feedback and input would be provided.* Mrs. McBean-Clairborne commented that this item could fit in with Goal 2 and Mr. Sigler agreed.

Mr. Dennis asked how Committee members felt about the Personnel Committee or another appropriate committee looking at a department vacancy when it occurs and the need for filling the position. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said a few years ago the Legislature created a special committee to do that. There was effectiveness to it, but no requests to fill a vacancy were denied. Further discussion followed and Mr. Sigler believes a mechanism needs to be in place for reviewing positions and begin reducing the size of government. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne understands Mr. Sigler's concerns and believes departments do their best with budgeting and planning their needs. *Ms. Fitzpatrick suggested that this topic would be a good discussion for a joint meeting with Legislators and Department Heads.*

Discussion followed concerning Goal 1 and the strategies and success indicator(s). A question was raised about what constitutes organizational structures in paragraph 1.3 of Goal 1. It was thought to mean departments and there was agreement to change the paragraph to read: "Ensure the development of a core...".

Further discussion followed on Goal 2 including the strategies and success indicator(s). Ms. Kiefer suggested and the Committee agreed to add the word "consistency" to the list in strategy 2.1.

Goal 3 was reviewed and it was felt that it should include words such as "support" and "implement", and change the word "policies" to "strategies". It was also suggested that success indicators 3.a and 3.b could be reversed. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne agreed to work with Ms. Moore on Goal 3 and bring it back to the Committee that represents what the Personnel Committee will be doing.

Committee members spoke in support of Goal 4 as presented. The issue of performance reviews for the four positions reporting to Legislature was raised. The Committee felt that could be included in Goal 4. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne stated that by the end of the year there should be something in place for performance evaluations. *She said by June she hopes to have a status report for the Committee to discuss in July. Mr. Dennis agreed to work with Mrs. McBean-Clairborne and Ms. Younger on this.*

Minutes
Personnel Committee
May 9, 2007

The Committee reviewed and spoke briefly about Goal 5; no suggestions for revisions were made. Mr. Dennis noted that there will be a report to the Committee in June.

Ms. Kiefer said she had hoped to see as a goal the creation of an employee's handbook outlining benefits and responsibilities of a county employee. *Ms. Fitzpatrick said she will have a draft for the Committee to review in June.*

Committee members agreed to finalize the goals and approve them at the next meeting following some minor revisions as recommended by the Committee.

Ms. Kiefer questioned if the pay equity study could be a goal. Ms. Moore suggested and the Committee agreed to add it as 2.3 under strategies in Goal 2.

Report from the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne did not have a report.

Personnel Department

Workforce Demographics Report

Committee members reviewed the workforce demographics report distributed with the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Mr. Sigler, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the April 18th meeting as submitted.

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the amendments to the March 14th meeting as submitted by Ms. Kiefer. (Amendments reflected in the final version of the minutes.)

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.