



**TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION**

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, May 6, 2021
Virtual Webinar Meeting

Committee

Present: Karen Fassuliotis, Committee Chair; William Drake, Miriam Kreuzer, Elizabeth K. Krumeich

Staff: Megan Brant, Employee Benefits Administrator, Human Resources (HR) Department (Dept); Erica Mahoney, Ass't Director, HR Dept; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Mary Pepe, Director, HR Dept

Board: Michael Mason, BET Chairman; Leslie Moriarty, Jeffrey S. Ramer

BOE/GPS: Regina Williams, Ass't Director Human Resources, GPS

Guests: Kelly Distassio, Advisor, Digital One; Kate Lavoie, Public Sector Practice, Digital One; Darcy Smith, Benefit Consultant, Digital One

Committee Chair, Ms. Fassuliotis, called the meeting to order at 8:34 A.M.

Digital One Update on Health Care

Ms. Lavoie reviewed the Town's CT Partnership Plan ("Partnership"). The Town's contract renewal date is July 1, 2021. She noted that Partnership membership statewide is now 59,000 and has been recognized nationally as a model for public government health plans. The Partnership estimates the premium cost in January and finalizes the premium late in March after analysis of conditions and costs are factored in. The Town planned for an estimated 4% increase of premium this past January for budgeting purposes and learned this April that the cost of premium would increase by 2% for FY2022, resulting in an approximate \$2 million "savings" in the budget.

Digital One surveyed the marketplace and recommended staying with the Partnership Plan at this time not only for its compelling financials but also because any change from the original application would require a new application that would change the terms of the original contract. Committee members asked questions about Digital One's frequency of RFPs to the marketplace

to review competitive pricing, Partnership Plan audit reports and whether participant utilization of medical benefits under pandemic emergency conditions had an impact on the reduction of the renewal rate to 2%.

HR Reports

- **Vacancy Report**

Ms. Pepe highlighted the following three items from the written HR Department's Vacancy report:

Town

- **Collective Bargaining Specialist** – The applicants responding to the position posting did not meet the requirements of the position. The Town has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to explore outsourcing the position.
- **Deputy Chief Police** – A retirement of an administrative/operations Deputy Chief will occur at the end of the month. External and Internal candidate have applied and the Police Chief will make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen at the end of May.
- **Building Inspector** – Due to a recent retirement, an inspector position has been posted for the Building Construction & Maintenance Department to ensure adequate staff to respond to the volume of real estate sales and permit applications.
- **Sewer Division Process Control Manager** –Subsequent to recent arbitration, the referee adjudicated that a full arbitration hearing of the circumstances could be set for September.

BOE

- **Custodial Positions** – Due to a Custodian retirement and two additional Head Custodian imminent retirements, movement in this staffing category, vacancies are higher than typical. Ms. Williams stated that until the positions are filled, additional overtime costs are likely.
- **Workers' Compensation Report**

Mr. Mynarski reported the Workers' Compensation Fund spending has a \$288,458 surplus after 44 weeks. He indicated that \$19,000 was transferred to OPEB in April. The Fund is trending well with the potential of a substantial surplus at year-end of as much as a surplus of \$300,000 at year end. This will be third budget reduction of the Workers' Compensation budget in four years. In response to a question as to whether the lower workman's compensation was due to less children in the public school system Mr. Mynarski remarked that he believed that the impact of fewer children in schools had a minimal impact on surplus remainder.

Update on Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) and Any Other Options

Liaisons to the Pension Liability Special Project Team, Ms. Kreuzer and Mr. Duus, reported that after meeting with Mr. Mynarski and Ms. Pepe, consideration of the DROP option was prioritized as the most relevant due to upcoming Union negotiations.

Town Hall – COVID-19 Update

Ms. Pepe update the Committee on COVID protocols in Town Hall. Town Hall is now open for full-day public access without appointments. Conference Room use is still restricted to employee meetings have conference room meetings within spacing protocol guidelines.

Board of Education – COVID-19 Update

Ms. Williams reported that COVID cases in the Greenwich Public Schools are low and remote learners are gradually returning to classrooms; an additional group of students is scheduled to return on June 1. GHS classes are now back to in-class teaching five days a week. Teachers are also returning to in-person instruction at the lower grade levels.

HR Training Programs Update

Ms. Pepe commented that the Department’s training programs had mandated training, such as universal employee Harassment Prevention, and a variety of other options including: online test-based training, classroom instruction with an external consultant, new hire quarterly orientations, the Department’s 10-month Leadership Institute and pilot programs such as a new Shipman & Goodwin initial social media program, which is being tested for format. Ms. Pepe was asked if the Department’s HR 101 (basic leadership) course could be offered to volunteer Board and Commission members by HR. One Board member suggested it should be mandatory for M&C employees and offered to the Board of Selectmen. A Committee member remarked that this course should be seriously considered as a precautionary risk management opportunity. Ms. Pepe was asked by the Committee to notify the various town Boards and Commissions of training options available by HR, especially as an orientation for newly appointed members.

Performance Reviews Update

Ms. Pepe remarked that M&C reviews traditionally take place in May and for union employees in the fall. She reminded Committee members that union member step increases were contingent upon receiving a “satisfactory” performance approval rating. A formal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is implemented for less than satisfactory performance, including for supervisory level employees. A performance review is mandatory prior to the conclusion of the probationary (new hire) employees becoming full time employees.

Approval of BET HR Committee Meeting Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the Regular BET Human Resources Committee Meetings of April 14 and January 13, 2021 is postponed until the June meeting.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Ms. Krumeich, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 A.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Sidor

Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

Karen Fassuliotis

Karen Fassuliotis, HR Committee Chair

The next Regular Meeting of the BET Human Resources Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at 8:30 A.M. which will be either a virtual meeting or in-person depending on the status of COVID-19 and any COVID-19 restrictions.