

# COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE

June 20, 2022 at 5:45 PM

Chairman Cavanaugh called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Cavanaugh, George-Kelly, Barry, Gamache, Burkush

Messrs.: P. Croasdale, K. Ferguson

1. HR Reports submitted by Kathleen Ferguson, Human Resources Director:
  - Position Summary Report
  - Vacancy Requisition Requests and Approvals
  - Summary of Arbitrations/Grievances
  - Sapphire SmartShopper Report*(Note: Provided for informational purposes only; no action is required.)*
2. Update on the audit of the New Hampshire Retirement System submitted by the HR Director.  
*(Note: Provided for informational purposes only; no action is required.)*
3. Communication from the HR Director requesting an increase in the labor grade for the Human Resources Analyst position from a 20 to a 21.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman George-Kelly**, it was voted to approve.*

4. Communication from the HR Director requesting an increase in the labor grade for the Compensation Manager position from a 20 to a 21.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Gamache**, it was voted to approve.*

5. Communication from Brenda Masewic Adams, Tax Collector, requesting the elimination of a vacant Administrative Assistant I, grade 12 position and the addition of an Administrative Assistant II, grade 13.

*On motion of **Alderman George-Kelly**, duly seconded by **Alderman Burkush**, it was voted to approve.*

6. Communication from Emily Rice, Solicitor, requesting the reclassification of an Attorney II, grade 25, to an Attorney III, grade 27, effective July 1, 2022.

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Gamache**, it was voted to approve.*

7. Communication from Kevin Sheppard, Public Works Director, requesting the reclassification of a Clerk of the Works, grade 17, to a Project Coordinator, grade 18.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman George-Kelly**, it was voted to approve.*

8. Communication from Phil Croasdale, Water Works Director, requesting the following labor grade increases:
  - Water Works Director from a 28 to a 29
  - Water Works Deputy Director of Water Distribution from a 25 to a 27
  - Water Works Deputy Director of Water Treatment & Supply from a 25 to a 27
  - Water Works Deputy Director of Finance & Administration from a 25 to a 27*(Note: The HR Director recommends that the Deputy Director of Finance & Administration be increased to a labor grade 26 instead of 27.)*

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted to approve.*

9. Communication from Sharon Wickens, Finance Director and Denise Boutilier, Parking Manager, requesting the reclassification of an Accounting Specialist II, grade 12, to an Administrative Services Manager, grade 16.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Gamache**, it was voted to approve.*

10. Communication from the HR Director, in conjunction with the Fire Chief, recommending that the "United States citizen" requirement be removed from various Fire Department class specifications.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman George-Kelly**, it was voted to approve.*

Chairman Cavanaugh stated we got a letter from Phil Croasdale, Water Works Director. Do we want to talk about that?

Alderman Barry stated in reference to the email you sent to the aldermen about, for example, Juneteenth being a holiday for non-affiliates, as of right now they don't have that day off. I would like to make a motion that they have it off in coordination with the rest of the city that has that day off.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I know that we did talk about it. I guess we will have to go through the process tomorrow. I think we should keep the non-affiliates the same as the contracts that are coming up. I know that Juneteenth is something that we have been talking about to make it a city-wide holiday. We probably have to talk about that with the full Board.

Alderman Barry stated the way it is right now, there are some offices that are fully open and some that aren't and it is going to get even worse next year. I don't agree with a

floating holiday because that would open up the door for everyone. The unions bargained to have that day off.

Philip Croasdale, Water Works Director, stated I just thought a floating holiday because the mayor wanted offices to stay open. I suggested making it a floating holiday so we could keep our options open. It is up to the committee.

Alderman Barry asked a floating holiday like on a Saturday or Sunday.

Mr. Croasdale stated I know that Martin Luther King Day is a floating holiday for us.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I think this is something that we should really talk about with the full Board though.

Mr. Croasdale asked can I address the letter.

Chairman Cavanaugh answered sure.

Mr. Croasdale stated I had a couple of other things for this committee to consider. That is the vacation time and the rule change starting with three weeks' vacation instead of two. You can see the schedule. If you stagger four, five and six weeks out, at the end of the 25 years you would have the same number of weeks off anyway. It is basically starting new hires at three weeks' vacation because what we are seeing is people are coming in looking...we are trying to recruit people and they are coming in with four, five or six years of experience with another company and they are already up to three and sometimes four weeks a year and when we tell them they start with two they feel they have to go all the way back to two weeks' vacation. It is pretty standard, I think, out there in the world now for employees to start with three weeks' vacation. If you look at the schedule that I attached to the letter, if you change when they go to four, five and six weeks, again after 25 years they would have had the same number of vacation weeks. It is just really front-ending it to get people.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated the attraction is huge and we talked about retaining and attracting employees and I think this is something we can all work towards. I think it is crazy that one of the issues I see in the city for our employees is you accrue time but you can't use it for six to twelve months. So you have earned the time but you can't use it. I think we have to be more flexible as an employer because the private industry out there is beating us and we have to address a lot of these issues I think.

Mr. Croasdale stated the last issue I brought up in my letter was I know that in our bargaining unit, the Steelworker's, they can sell back vacation time. I am not complaining but I have lost about two weeks of vacation a year because I am dedicated to my job. I think a lot of other employees, too...like you said once you get up to six weeks off and add holidays you have a lot of time off and people who are dedicated to their jobs don't feel like they can take all of that time off. I think it would be a benefit to them if they could sell back one week's vacation. As I indicated, let the employee pick up not only the employee's pension cost of 5%, which they charge every employee, but pick up the City's share too which right now is 35%. In the case of Water Works, we are

only liable for the actual pay. Right now you would save roughly 40% by doing that. Have the employee contribute to that?

Chairman Cavanaugh asked so the payout for the week of vacation would be like 65% compared to 100%.

Mr. Croasdale replied yes. What you are seeing is a lot of employees as they move on have a minimum of four or five weeks' vacation. They are towards the end so it would be a way for them to pick up an extra week's pay.

Alderman Barry asked can we have Kathy, and I know she only has 10 days left, but maybe she can review this and come back to the committee with something. Actually maybe for tomorrow night.

Kathy Ferguson, HR Director, asked for what items.

Alderman Barry replied for all of the items he talks about in his letter.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I know we are going to hear about all the contracts tomorrow. I think if we get through that we can maybe put something out. I am going to try to save you during your last 10 days Kathy. It is something we can put on the radar because I think they are great ideas.

Alderman George-Kelly stated I think it is important to understand the financial costs of this just so we can make a really informed decision about it.

Ms. Ferguson stated that 65% buyback...it is probably earned compensation. They get their check from the city and in most cases they pay that 35% right? So they get the check for their vacation and that is earned income. I will double-check and find out. The NH Retirement System is a little bit different I think than the contributory retirement. I will find out what that cost would be for the city as well as Social Security and Medicare which they would pay anyways when they get their vacation check. It might be advantageous to do a buy back at 65%. Let's wait to see the numbers.

Alderman Barry stated but the non-affiliates...I don't think we would be talking about them if you are talking about teachers, police and fire that are in the NH Retirement System.

Ms. Ferguson responded it would be police and fire in the NH Retirement System and everybody else would be on the city retirement.

Chairman Cavanaugh asked the non-affiliated employees would all be city pension right.

Ms. Ferguson replied yes. So the cost of 35% that the city pays you would want the employee to pay.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated we have some work to do.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman George-Kelly**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clerk of Committee