

REVISED
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE
October 4, 2022 at 6:00 PM

Chairman Cavanaugh called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Messrs.: L. Drabik, R. Gagne

1. HR Reports submitted by Lisa Drabik, 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. Communication from the HR Director recommending a change to the Medicare Supplemental Plan for retirees age 65+.

Lisa Drabik, HR Director, stated this agenda item is to discuss a plan offering for retirees 65+ who are on Medicare. This is a supplement and it would be effective January 1, 2023. We currently offer two plans which essentially combine into one offering for both prescription coverage and additional medical coverage. The monthly premium for that plan is about \$450 and at renewal will go up to about \$460. After going to market, USI, our benefits broker, has recommended that we switch to an Anthem plan for this supplemental coverage. It is called the Anthem Medicare Advantage with Prescription Drug Plan. I am just going to hit some of the highlights. You have the complete information in your packet about the plan. It essentially provides enhanced coverage at a lower rate. The monthly premium per retiree for this plan is about \$300, which is \$150 a month savings with an annual savings of about \$2,000 per person or \$4,000 per year for a couple. We felt that this was a plan really worth considering, especially because it provides the same access to the doctors and pharmacies but does provide some enhanced benefits. I wanted to note that this plan is fully built and is the one that is being rolled out to the school district retirees effective January 1. Given our packed agenda, we don't have a formal presentation on the plan. We did provide the plan documents and some summary materials. I do have Leanna here from USI and Kim on behalf of Anthem and Michelle from my office, our Benefits Manager, to answer any questions that you have. We have a planned roll out for this that we are ready to hit go on if it is approved by you and the full Board.

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

3. Communication from the HR Director recommending the elimination of two (2) vacant Equipment Service Technician I (grade 12) positions, the addition of two (2) Inventory Specialist I (grade 13) positions, and a change in the Inventory Specialist I class specification for Central Fleet.

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

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I do want to bring up that this is for recruitment. These are vacant positions correct?

Ms. Drabik replied correct.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated there are some other things we have to go over but I wanted to make sure we are clear about that.

Ms. Drabik responded yes this is a change to their complement. They essentially would like to eliminate two positions with the same title and replace them with two other positions of a different title so they can recruit for that position and those skills.

4. Communication from Robert Gagne, Assessor, requesting approval for a Grade 20, step 4 (\$61,875.46) starting salary for the newly promoted Residential Assessor retroactive to August 29.
(Note: The HR Director recommends that the committee entertain additional pay steps for promotional pay raises only in exceptional circumstances so as not to create a precedent.)

***Alderman Barry** moved to approve. **Alderman Gamache** duly seconded the motion.*

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I would like to hear from Bob. I know this is a big jump but there is some good experience here.

Robert Gagne, Assessor, stated as I explained in my letter this is a position that if I were hiring from outside I would have discretion to hire up to a Step 5 but because the person is already working in my office in a different position, the most I can offer is a 10% bump which gets him to Step 1. This person has 20 years of experience where the job requires 3 or 4 years of experience. He has more experience than the specs call for and extensive experience that exceeds what the specs call for. This is on top of other cities and towns who are recruiting this type of position than greater than where we are at already. I am just fearful that if I can't get that Step 4 he may opt for one of the other cities or towns that are hiring right now.

Alderman George-Kelly stated Lisa I would love to hear from you. I know there is a note on our agenda saying that you recommend that the committee entertain additional pay steps for promotional pay raises only in exception circumstances so that we are not setting a precedent. Can you tell me if you think that this is one of those exceptional circumstances and if you would support this?

Ms. Drabik answered I do. If I could just add a note to that, having come on board after the change was made to the ordinance allowing department heads the discretion to hire up to Step 5 for outside candidates, there is some tension between that and the language on promotions only allowing for a 10% bump. It is not always going to be the case...often the 10% bump is appropriate for the promotion. A case like this where he is moving from a Grade 13 to a Grade 20 position by virtue of his experience and given what the Assessor has indicated, I would support it as an extraordinary circumstance.

Alderman Burkush asked was this candidate the only applicant and it was only advertised internally.

Mr. Gagne replied yes we only posted internally and we had a candidate so it didn't go outside.

Chairman Cavanaugh called for a vote. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

5. Communication from the HR Director recommending the addition of a grant-funded Public Health Specialist III, grade 22, position to the Health Department.

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

6. Recommendations from the HR Director regarding the tabled items and future reclassification/complement change requests as follows:
 - Approve the reclassifications for tabled items 7 through 9, and the complement change for item 10;
 - Receive and file tabled items 11 through 14;
 - Keep item 15 on the table per the Public Works Director's request and pending further discussion;
 - Halt any further reclassification requests unless there are extraordinary circumstances; and
 - Continue to evaluate requests to change the complement of a department as necessary for the hiring of vacant positions.

*On motion of **Alderman George-Kelly**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted to remove items 7-14 from the table.*

Chairman Cavanaugh stated Lisa I think it would be easier if you can speak to these. I think it is important to go over each one individually because I know these did come to this committee and we approved them and it created some ripple effects that we weren't counting on and I think it is important to address those because it does affect some people here and I want to speak to that because I know everyone here is committed to the employees. We have done that in the past year and a half or two years when we were going through negotiations that we were going to keep the non-affiliated the same as the bargaining units. It is something that means a lot to me and I want to at least give everyone the commitment that we are going to do that. I would like to go through the process and look at each one.

Ms. Drabik stated if you don't mind I would like to set the table with my general approach here understanding that you are going to address each item on its own. As you know, the BMA authorized the funds for a city-wide compensation study and this committee asked me at last month's meeting to review and opine on the reclassifications and complement changes that were on the table and have stayed on the table over the course of several months, especially given the compensation study that is now on the horizon. I have taken a close look at them over the last month and talked to several people and my recommendations are as follows. I would suggest that they be divided into three general groups. The first group would be the ones that I recommend you proceed with. Those would be Items 7-10 on your agenda tonight. I placed those into a group because they are either reclassifications that involve a single employee whose job duties have so substantially changed that they are doing a different position if you will or a complement change where there is a vacant position, kind of like we did earlier where the department would like to hire a different position than the one currently in their complement. That is the first group, Items 7-10. The second group is Items 11-14. These involve requests which in my judgement would be best suited for the compensation study. They affect not just one employee in most cases but could affect a class of employees across the city in different departments. The last time is Item 15 which you have already left on the table. I simply was not able to get to that one in time for this meeting.

Alderman Barry stated I guess my concern with Items 11-14 is I would like to keep them on the table. The unfortunate thing with the study that we are going to have done is it could take years. We have to go out for an RFP and that could be a couple of years down the road before we finally pick someone and they go through the process. It is going to be very, very involved. It is not only going to involve these people but the whole city as a group. That is going to be a tough sell to the unions when we finally do get the recommendation from whoever does the study. What I would recommend is that we keep Items 11-14 on the table and give the department heads a chance to come either before us or before the HR Director to give the reason why they think these people should be getting step increases. If we have had past practice that we have followed...for example if we had one person that moved up to say a step 25 and then another one moved up to a step 25 in the past I think we need to follow that unfortunately and then we can go with the recommendation of the group that we hire. I just don't think it is fair...and I know what is going to happen. I know this is going to have a snowball effect where there will be a lot of people in the Clerk's Office who might be involved and the Welfare Department and Water Works; all of them. I would just like to see Items 11-14 tabled. I would make a motion to keep them on the table with the understanding that those department heads will visit with you and give the reasons why and a little background. I don't know the background but from what I understand there is a possibility that past practice will dictate some of this.

Ms. Drabik stated if I could speak to that I just want to assure you that I did speak with the department heads and got as much context as I could understanding that I am new to the city of course and don't have all of the background. I am hopeful that it won't take a couple of years. I am already trying to push the go button and get things started. I am hopeful that it will be done within a year. Maybe that is naïve but that is my goal. I certainly understand where you are coming from. I am sympathetic to their concerns. I am also keeping in mind that when we are ready to put out the RFP and begin the

process there comes a point at which you need to sort of freeze what you have other than COLA's and such otherwise you are trying to study a moving target. That was the genesis of my recommendations at the end which I didn't get to. I wanted to say at some point, and I think that point might be now but of course I defer to you, I would suggest that we halt further reclassification requests absent extraordinary circumstances and continue to evaluate complement changes for vacant positions as the needs of departments change from this point forward with the compensation study on the horizon. I don't want there to be a rush of them. If we set a date certain say December 31 then we are going to be faced with...and I don't blame them of course but I am trying to figure out the best way to allocate my staff's time and resources as well as we go forward towards this compensation study.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I would suggest that we approve Items 7-10.

7. Communication from Jeff Belanger, Planning & Community Development Director, requesting the reclassification of a Planning Technician, grade 14, to a Community Development Support Specialist, grade 16.
(Note: Tabled on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director.)
8. Report of the HR Committee recommending that the request from the Public Works Director to reclassify the Clerk of the Works, grade 17, to a Project Coordinator, grade 18, be approved.
(Note: This committee report was referred back to the HR Committee at the 7/19/22 BMA meeting and tabled in committee on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director).
9. Report of the HR Committee recommending that the request from the Finance Director and Parking Manager to reclassify an Accounting Specialist II, grade 12, to an Administrative Services Manager, grade 16, be approved.
(Note: This committee report was referred back to the HR Committee at the 7/19/22 BMA meeting and tabled in committee on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director).
10. Report of the HR Committee recommending that the request from the Tax Collector to eliminate one (1) vacant Administrative Assistant I, grade 12, position and add one (1) Administrative Assistant II, grade 13, position be approved.
(Note: This committee report was referred back to the HR Committee at the 7/19/22 BMA meeting and tabled in committee on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director).

On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman George-Kelly**, it was voted to approve Items 7-10.

Alderman Barry moved to table Items 11-14.

11. Report of the HR Committee recommending that the request from the Water Works Director to increase labor grades as follows:
 - 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

be approved.

(Note: This committee report was referred back to the HR Committee at the 7/19/22 BMA meeting and tabled in committee on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director).

12. Communication from Brenda Masewic Adams, Tax Collector, requesting the reclassification of Customer Service Representative III's, grade 13, to Municipal Collections Clerks, grade 14.
(Note: Tabled on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director.)
13. Report of the HR Committee recommending that the request from the HR Director to increase the labor grade for the Human Resources Analyst position from a 20 to a 21 be approved.
(Note: This committee report was referred back to the HR Committee at the 7/19/22 BMA meeting and tabled in committee on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director).
14. Report of the HR Committee recommending that the request from the HR Director to increase the labor grade for the Compensation Manager position from a 20 to a 21 be approved.

Alderman Barry stated Lisa the way I look at it is if we receive and file them then that is like throwing them out. If we table them, we can always come back and it will give you the opportunity...I know you did say you spoke with them but now they know. They can make the case on why these people deserve or should be getting step increases and show what has happened in the past. I don't know but would like to know exactly how everything was handled in the past because if steps were given out to one individual and then another one automatically got that same step because they were equal, I don't know why that would stop. Again, the study is going to show differently down the road but I will make a motion to table so we don't get rid of them and it will give us the opportunity to revisit if we have to.

Alderman Gamache duly seconded the motion.

Alderman George-Kelly asked Alderman Barry are you asking that all of the department heads that are requesting Items 11-14 come to our next meeting to talk about them.

Alderman Barry replied I want them to meet with the HR Director.

Alderman George-Kelly responded she said they already met with her and they already made their case and her recommendation is to receive and file. I am not sure that her recommendation is going to change based on further meetings so I am wondering what our goal is in tabling them and how we are going to decide what the next step is.

Alderman Barry asked did they give you examples of why they think their employees should be reclassified.

Ms. Drabik answered yes. I am certainly sympathetic to that but I also see the other side. Again, being new at least does have some advantages here in that I can take sort of a dispassionate look at it understanding that I am just making a recommendation and you are the decision-makers.

Alderman Barry stated I appreciate that.

Alderman Burkush stated what I would like to know is exactly what each classification affects. Just saying anecdotally that it affects a lot of people if we do one reclassification...I would like to look if someone comes forward with one for an explanation to the committee as to the effects in different departments. We don't really have all of that information.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I would like to speak to that. I am the Chairman of the committee and these came through in April and we passed them and I take responsibility for that but the ripple effects of that and the calls that I received were overwhelming. I would love to sit here and give everyone what we can. I think the city has to be more competitive to retain and recruit but it was overwhelming. It is not fair to the ones we are not getting to now. I think with the money we are putting in for the study...one of the things I want to bring up is to get something going next month if it is possible. Like I said earlier, I feel terrible having to wait because I know these are deserved but I know it is more deserving to other people too and if we leave some out that is not fair either. It doesn't matter to me either way and I will leave it up to the committee to receive and file or table.

Alderman George-Kelly stated I think that we have to consider Lisa's point. There has to be a time where we freeze these and that is never going to feel good. It is never going to feel good to the people we are saying no to so whether that is right now or we set some date in the future we have to agree as a committee that if we are really doing this study we have to allow this study to have a sample that they can actually collect data and make recommendations on versus a moving target all of the time. I just wonder how we do that. If we pass these right now or table them right now, at what point do we say this is where we end it so that a real study can take place?

Alderman Barry stated the way I look at it is we have three departments involved with these – Water Works, Tax Collector and Lisa herself as the HR Director. What I would entertain is having the Water Works Director submit to us as a committee or to Chairman Cavanaugh why each and every one of his employees, and there are four of them including himself, should be going from Grade 25 to 27 except for the director which is Grade 27 to Grade 29. I would also have Brenda come in and explain why the Customer Service Rep's should be going from a Grade 13 to a 14 and the HR Director. That is a tricky one because she has already asked to have those received and filed. I would just...I don't know what you would do. Maybe your employees can give a good reason why they think they should be approved. The former HR Director is the one that submitted the plan to increase those two positions from Grade 20 to 21. I would just

entertain that each one that is asking for a grade increase give us reasons why and submit those to the committee.

Chairman Cavanaugh responded I think we will be in the same boat we are in now because...

Alderman Barry interjected but if we receive and file we won't be. If we put these on the table and give them the opportunity...

Alderman Cavanaugh interjected if we keep these going, what about the other departments. There are titles in Item 12 that are in every other department.

Alderman Barry replied I get that and I understand that and that is why we have to see what the ripple effect is going to be. I just don't want to lose these right now. I don't want to give up on them because if we receive and file and wait for the new group to come in, that could take a couple of years for them to go through everything and come back with a recommendation. I will stick with the motion to table.

Chairman Cavanaugh called for a vote on the motion to table. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

Ms. Drabik stated before you leave that item, with regard to future reclassification requests, I would suggest that because these have been left on the table and they were leftover from prior meetings and actions taken by this committee that those be considered but perhaps we draw the line now. I am just worried that there are going to be ramifications and cascading events. Again, I defer to you but...

Chairman Cavanaugh interjected I agree. I would like to stop them all until we look at the study to be honest. It is just that you have limited resources and you are going to be doing the study. You have to send out an RFP and do a lot of work for that. In my opinion if those stay on the table then they stay on the table until we get the study. That is my opinion.

Alderman Burkush asked wasn't she talking about additional requests besides these. Isn't that what you were talking about?

Ms. Drabik answered right. To the extent that any additional reclassification requests continue to come in, I would like some direction from the committee about whether we can say we are going to wait now for the study absent some extraordinary circumstance or whether you want us to continue doing those until a future date.

Alderman Barry stated out of fairness, we would have to entertain them. I know what you are saying but what defines an extraordinary circumstance? We don't know. I would hope that the department heads get the message that...well they have already sent us their message. These are people that aren't unionized. It is a lot less people that we have to deal with in reference to these items. We can't close the door on them. I don't think that would be fair but hopefully we don't get reclassifications unless they are very specific and have a good reason why they should be granted. Something may come up where someone says we just noticed this and this person is entitled to be

brought up because of this, that or the other thing or because other people have and in the past they have always been brought up at the same time.

Chairman Cavanaugh asked how many department heads do we have here. How many will have requests? So there are five right there. Just be ready I guess. If we need a motion to stop them tonight...it pains me like I said twice already but it is something that I think to do it right, we have to do it all.

Alderman George-Kelly stated like Alderman Barry said, we don't know what the extraordinary circumstances are but that is why we have an HR Director. That is her area of expertise and although she is new to our community, I think we have to trust that she is going to bring to us and make recommendations to approve the changes that really fit under that category and if there are recommendations that we don't approve moving forward in order to wait for the study to happen I think we have to, as a committee, be committed to that so that a true study can take place.

Chairman Cavanaugh moved to freeze all reclassifications as of today. There was no second.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated Lisa I know you are going to be even busier now but with the wage table study is there any way we can start that process immediately and try to get something in place for next month's meeting?

Ms. Drabik responded yes. Thank you for the question. I did want to update the committee on where things stand as of now. In my first few weeks I have been busy meeting with department heads, our contractors and providers and the retirement system, etc. as well as members of my own staff trying to learn the city policies and practices and evaluating the tabled items as we have been discussing. I have also begun preliminary work related to the compensation study. I met first with my team to do some initial brainstorming. I have contacted several HR counterparts in municipalities across the state that have recently done compensation studies and received those results to take a look at the basic components of these studies. I have solicited input from the mayor, department heads and other stakeholders and interviewed two potential what I am calling sub-consultants if you will. These are folks who are certified compensation consultants and experts in the industry. I am by no means an expert in the compensation field so I want insure that we do this right. The purpose of interviewing these sub-consultants as I am calling them is I would like to enter into a contract with one of them to help us craft the RFP and to go through the RFP process with us to make sure we are setting the parameters of the study to get what we need for a city of this size and as complicated as our current classification is. I am hoping to nail that down within the next month and have that contract ready to go and get started by the November meeting and have that consultant available at that meeting for you to ask questions and that sort of thing. Hopefully, we can get the RFP out within a month or so thereafter. I would like to get going on this. That is my intent.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated that is great. One more thing that I would like to bring up and I know we have talked about recruitment and retaining people and I have seen private industry and other cities and towns and the state offering bonuses. Could we

just look at something? I just want to throw this out there. I know for non-affiliated people who start with the city get two weeks' vacation correct?

Ms. Drabik answered that is correct.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I would like to see that increased to three weeks and I know that people can't use any of their accrued vacation time until they have more than six months.

Ms. Drabik responded correct. Until you have been on the job for six months you are not allowed to use vacation. You can purchase vacation to use during that time but you can't use the accrued vacation.

Chairman Cavanaugh stated I would like to have that looked at for next month. I would like to see up to three weeks for new employees and if we have an employee that we bring in that has this time sitting there for the first six months that can't use it, I think that is a detriment to an employer. Maybe we can leave it up to the manager's discretion to allow that person to...if someone is not showing up in the first six months' they are not going to be here long but if there is someone you want to keep and you bring someone in that has something scheduled I think it is important to let them use that time.

Ms. Drabik replied okay.

TABLED ITEMS

- 15.** Communication from Tim Clougherty, Public Works Director, requesting the reclassification of an Application Developer/Analyst, grade 19, to an Application Developer/Analyst II, grade 20.
(Note: Tabled on 9/6/22 to allow a review by the HR Director.)

This item remained on the table.

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

A True Record. Attest.



Clerk of Committee