

MINUTES

Approved 3/14/07

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

JANUARY 10, 2007 3:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: J. Dennis, Chair; D. Kiefer; G. Stevenson; M. Sigler

Excused: L. McBean-Clairborne

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; B. DeLuca, Mental Health Commissioner; C. DeMarco, Mental Health Department; S. Martel Moore, Deputy County Administrator; A. Fitzpatrick, Personnel Commissioner; M. Lynch, Public Information; P. Carey, Social Services Commissioner; P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator

Call to Order

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

Changes to Agenda

The Committee agreed to add a discussion concerning the 2006 and 2007 goals to the agenda.

Report from the Chair

Mr. Dennis introduced the new members of the Committee and staff. He announced the Negotiating Team for the Road Patrol has two meetings scheduled for January. However, the first meeting, January 12th, he believes will be cancelled due to the unavailability of some road-patrol union representatives. The second meeting is scheduled for January 17th and at that time the ground rules will be developed. He will continue to keep the Committee informed.

He reported on the meeting he had with Administration management staff concerning committee goals. A follow-up meeting will be held with County Administrator Steve Whicher and Deputy County Administrator Paula Younger to further discuss goals and he will also have a separate meeting with Legislature Chair Tim Joseph to discuss Committee responsibilities.

Ms. Kiefer asked if the Committee was responsible for reviewing any Administrative Manual Policies this year; Mrs. Covert noted this responsibility was assigned to the Government Operations Committee.

Performance Review and Evaluation Policy

The Committee briefly discussed and reviewed the existing Performance Review and Evaluation Policy. Ms. Fitzpatrick provided an overview of the history and said the policy had been revised in 2005 and approved by the Budget and Capital Committee and then forwarded to the Government Operations Committee for consideration. However, at that meeting, the County Administrator requested postponing action to allow further review of the policy. Ms. Kiefer expressed interest in reviewing the policy with the proposed revisions in 2005. *Ms. Fitzpatrick recommended and the Committee agreed that further discussion on the policy be deferred to the next Committee meeting and that a copy of the revised policy as proposed in 2005 be made available to Committee members.* Ms. Kiefer suggested having a copy of the review form would be useful. Ms. Fitzpatrick said she has models from other departments that could be made available.

Salaries – Red-Circled Positions

Resolution

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Sigler, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval. Discussion followed and Ms. Kiefer said she was startled

to have this resolution handed out since the Committee has not yet had time to consider this matter in depth, which was the intent of the Legislative resolution referring this to committee. She stated that she thought the Committee would take the time to discuss alternative approaches in setting salaries this year and propose a process such as reviewing market analysis, merit increases, etc. Mr. Dennis feels that discussions would lead to a recommendation that these positions be treated the same as management. He also believes that this proposal is the fairest method. Ms. Fitzpatrick said this is one approach for setting salaries. This subject has been discussed for ten years without any process being adopted. She is willing to provide any information or criteria the Committee requests including market analysis, merit review, etc., to assist in resolving this issue before the end of the year. Mr. DeLuca commented there are different strategies that have been used and said he is hoping for clarity on this issue. The last two years, he provided the Committee with a market analysis survey of salaries per hour rate throughout New York State and is also willing to provide any other information Committee members request. Over the years, Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that Legislators have also requested information about salaries for management and confidential employees.

Ms. Martel Moore commented that she spoke about the Personnel Committee agenda this morning with Department Heads and a request was made that the Committee review management and confidential salaries and establish guidelines. It was agreed this subject would be raised later in the meeting when the subject of goals is discussed.

Mr. Dennis commented on a market analysis and feels that would occur when someone is being replaced. He also feels that the County could pay a lot more money if services performed were hired out on a contractual basis. Mr. DeLuca spoke briefly about the costs other agencies pay for contractual services. He also commented that he has had zero turnover since 2000 in the red-circled positions.

Ms. Kiefer spoke of her disappointment for pushing this action through and reiterated her opinion that the Committee should follow the Legislature referral expectation and take the time to review and discuss alternative approaches including rate of inflation, merit pay, market analysis, and the fact that a percentage increase of a high salary is a lot more in dollars than the same percentage of a low salary. Ms. Fitzpatrick said she provided a memorandum in 2006 that showed the salary schedule for the red-circled positions and the top two labor grades in management and would make that information available if Committee members are interested.

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, to Table this resolution. MOTION FAILED DUE TO LACK OF A SECOND.

A voice vote resulted as follows on the resolution: Ayes – 3 (Dennis, Sigler, and Stevenson); Noes – 1 (Kiefer); Excused – 1 (McBean-Clairborne). 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 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, That effective immediately, incumbents in the titles of Psychiatrist, Medical Director – Mental Health, and 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.

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Training Plan

Ms. Martel Moore updated the Committee on previous trainings and said the Personnel Department has worked with TC3 on a variety of trainings. The hope is to create a three-year training plan this year for supervisors and managers and the workforce in general. The training would include core courses such as conflict management, evaluations, performance measures, etc. Field trainings are handled by individual department needs. Ms. Martel Moore noted that some training programs may require additional funding. It was noted that there is currently \$50,000 budgeted for training in the Personnel Department's budget and \$15,000 for diversity initiatives.

Ms. DeMarco hoped an effort and priority would be made to have supervisors support all employees taking these trainings.

Ms. Younger commented on a recent exercise with Department Heads to explore themes and one of the themes was a comprehensive training needs assessment for the whole organization. Another theme included performance reviews. She spoke about the importance and necessity of senior management input and that these areas are being looked at and discussed with Department Heads.

Ms. Carey commented on the training her employees are mandated to have and said that she hoped that would be taken into consideration when other trainings are offered to avoid overburdening employees with training.

In response to a question raised concerning the cost of training, Ms. Younger said it depends on the training being offered and what the needs are and should also include the purpose. Ms. Carey said if the Committee requested, she could provide the cost for training needs in her department as required by the State.

Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Appointments

The Committee reviewed the applications submitted for appointment to the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee. A question concerning residency requirements was raised and it was noted that the bylaws include a statement waiving the rule for County residency requirement of County staff as they have a vested interest in this. In response to a question raised by Ms. Kiefer concerning recruitment, it was stated that a press release was not done. Ms. Martel Moore commented that outreach efforts have been taking place since the creation of this Committee in 2006. From the beginning, 15-25 people have consistently participated and those individuals have applied and are being considered for membership. This is an open Committee and anyone at anytime can attend. Mr. Sigler asked if there was a policy for Legislators serving on advisory boards. It was noted that a policy does not exist and that Legislators

serve on many advisory boards in various capacities. Ms. Carey spoke of the importance of having both Legislators and County staff as part of the process.

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to appoint the following individuals to the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee:

Kathy Luz Herrera - County Legislature representative
Martha Robertson - County Legislature representative
Betsy L. Doling - Community Member representative
Chantalise Demarco - County staff representative
Patricia Carey - County staff representative
Robert J. DeLuca - County staff representative
Larry Roberts - Community Member representative
Heather A. Stewart - County staff representative
Kristina M. Belanger - County staff representative
Shawn Martel-Moore - County staff representative
David S. Richardson - Community Member representative
Marcia E. Lynch - County staff representative
Carol Griep - County staff representative
Lisa Holmes - County staff representative
Constance Thompson - Community Member
Anita Fitzpatrick - County staff representative

Personnel Department

Pilot Health Insurance Plan

Ms. Fitzpatrick reported that the Health Insurance Pilot program was designed with assistance by an internal committee consisting of appropriate County staff. Memorandums of Understanding with the Unions with the exception of one Union were done to do an alternative plan for either one or two years. Under this Pilot employees are not having to pay a premium as the total premium for the Plan is lower because the exposure to out-of-pocket expenses could be substantially higher. There are 15 people enrolled for 2007. She will keep the Committee informed as soon as more information is available to review.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Stevenson about this plan being used as a secondary insurance, Ms. Fitzpatrick said it is not; it is primary insurance.

Utilization Review

Ms. Fitzpatrick noted last year the Committee discussed having a report or presentation from Blue Cross Blue Shield and NMHC representatives. A utilization review would show trends, catastrophic illnesses, medical costs and she said representatives are willing to attend a meeting to do a review. Ms. Fitzpatrick also noted that a presentation will be done for some of the unions and Legislators could be invited. Committee members did not express an interest in having a separate presentation and Ms. Fitzpatrick agreed to notify Legislators when that is scheduled.

Workforce Demographics

Ms. Fitzpatrick distributed and briefly reviewed the workforce demographics and said the reports are provided monthly and if Committee members have questions, to let her know.

Committee Goals (2006/2007)

At this time, the Committee reviewed the 2006 Committee goals and offered and accepted the following revisions:

- Performance Reviews and evaluations- County employees – *Paula Younger is in the process of working on this and moving it forward. **No action taken – roll over to 2007.***
- Develop Personnel Handbook – *Ms. Fitzpatrick said there are many pros and cons to having a handbook and that there needs to be a stakeholder group to develop the criteria. **No action taken – roll over to 2007.***

In reference to the Committee beginning its discussion with establishing goals for 2007, Ms. Younger said she will be meeting with each Committee chair separately to discuss goal setting. The committee continued its review of 2006 goals and agreed that the following items would be considered in 2007:

Action items (Committee information with most items requiring committee approval)

- Performance Reviews and evaluations - County employees
- Red-circled positions
- Performance evaluations - Four staff reporting to Legislature
- Training for Supervisors
- Exit interviews – develop County-wide policy

Information only (Committee review and understanding of items - committee action may be needed on some items)

- Report outs of experiences from employees who attend training
- Review of Civil Service exams and procedures
- Training for Committee members on appeal process as outlined in the policy
- Familiarize and understand labor grades and rates
- Review health benefits (Utilization Review will take place in March or April and all Legislators will be invited)
- Employee parking – Bus pass pilot program
- Residency requirements
- Salary schedules of contracted agencies funded by the County (review Human Services Coalition's report)
- Lateral transfers from out-of-county to fill positions
- Review process for reclassifying positions
- Affirmative Action Officer position – Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee discussing this in 2007

Staff directives (responsibility of staff with committee review and input)

- Study Guides for taking Civil Service exams
- Develop Personnel Handbook

Mr. Stevenson was excused at 4:30 p.m. during the discussion of Committee goals.

Following further discussion, the Committee requested a calendar work plan of the goals be developed. As a follow-up to the discussion earlier in the meeting, a request was made to include as a goal a discussion of management and confidential salaries and to develop a process and policy for setting terms and conditions of employment for the future. *The committee requested this topic be placed on the February or March Committee agenda.*

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Mr. Dennis requested if Committee members have any other goals to e-mail them to Personnel Commissioner Anita Fitzpatrick.

Approval of Minutes

It was the consensus of the Committee to approve the minutes of December 13, 2006, as corrected.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.