

## Transition Task Force

### Personnel Subcommittee

#### Report of 4/25/12 meeting

Members of the Transition Task Force's Personnel Subcommittee (Thea Berkhout, Jo Butler, Jill Jachera, Jim Levine, Shirley Meeker, Gary Patteson, Bruce Topolosky, and Sue Nemeth), Bob Bruschi, Kathy Monzo, Carol Calquhoun, Sandra Webb, and Alice Small (liaison from Consolidation Commission) met and discussed the following:

- Upcoming meeting times:
  - Wednesday, May 2 at 5:30 p.m. MEETING CANCELLED
  - Wednesday, May 9, 7:00 p.m.
  - Wednesday, May 16, 5:30 p.m.
- Sue Nemeth presented the committee with a document from the Township Committee related to the reconciliation of benefits and policies. Thea Berkhout indicated that since the committee had not had time to read the several page document prior to the meeting and since they had a long agenda, she preferred to wait to consider it at the next meeting. In addition, she questioned the appropriateness of the Township Committee directly addressing the Personnel Subcommittee instead of communicating through the TTF.
- Thea Berkhout asked for comments on the revised version of the document on the proposed selection process for redundant positions that she had sent out with the agenda. There was discussion regarding whether the description of the candidate pool needed to be clarified to ensure that no one would interpret the recommendation to imply that candidates could bump into lower non-redundant positions. There was consensus that the language was clear and need not be further changed regarding the candidate pool.

Then discussion focused on the composition and authority of the selection committee. There was agreement to recommend the addition of a professional HR/employment specialist who would be a neutral facilitator for the selection committee as well as for the administrators selecting the non-senior personnel. Committee members also agreed to request further clarification from the township and borough attorneys regarding the impact of three representatives being included on the selection committee from the Township Committee, which would constitute a quorum. Furthermore, based on the statement from Sue Nemeth that the Township Committee would require that it be able to approve the selection committee's decisions, committee members agreed that the procedures also include a statement that the governing bodies need to decide in advance if they are both going to want to approve the selection committee's decisions or if they will delegate that responsibility to the selection committee.

Committee members also discussed the selection process for the non-senior positions and agreed that when those selections are made, an interim administrator will have been selected, so that if there is not agreement between the two administrators in a selection decision, the interim administrator's choice would have more weight.

A revised document will be considered again at the next meeting of the Personnel Subcommittee on May 9, for a final recommendation to go to the Task Force on May 16.

- Gary Patteson provided a revised set of cost figures for the severance options that reflected some corrections he had made. This recommendation could go back to the TTF on May 2, provided the Finance Committee has reviewed it and indicates that it could agree with the recommendation. There was a request that the administrators ensure that the new numbers also include the cost of terminal leave.
- Thea Berkhout reported that a subgroup of the committee had met with administrators to review their proposed organizational structure for the administration and finance areas and that they were close to a recommendation on this. They will hold another meeting on Tuesday, May 1, to review the organizational structure recommendations for the Courts and for the Human Services areas and bring recommendations to the Personnel Subcommittee at its May 9 meeting.
- Jim Levine provided an update on the reconciliation of policies and benefits and indicated that he would be ready with a report to the TTF on May 16. He indicated that the subgroup working on this would most likely not be in agreement with the request in a letter from the Township Committee which basically asked to grandfather existing employees in all of their current benefits but that consideration was being given on the best way to transition benefits. Jim Levine indicated that his subgroup had held lively discussions about these issues and that he thought they would be recommending some solutions that would be better for employees of both municipalities than some of the existing policies.
- The committee agreed that once these three major recommendations (selection, severance, organizational structure) are made to the TTF, and the administrators will have met with representatives of PERC, then the Personnel Subcommittee could take up the issue of salary harmonization. It may be that a compensation study will need to be done to see where the salaries are compared to benefits packages.
- Shirley Meeker provided an updated report on cross-pollination efforts and indicated that she thought they were going well. She suggested that these efforts would go more smoothly once selections are made of those in interim positions, because then employees would know who was in charge of each area. Jim Levine asked her to reassure employees that the Personnel Subcommittee is moving as quickly as possible to get these decisions made.
- There was no new business and no public comment.

*Prepared by Thea Berkhout*

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