

**JOINT
PERSONNEL AND COMPENSATION
AND LABOR RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEES
MINUTES**

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2019

3:30 P.M.

PRESENT: John S. Vero, Chairman (Personnel and Compensation)
Leigh J. Benton, Paul Ruszkiewicz, Thomas Faggione, Rob Sassi
Laurie Tautel, Joel Sierra, Kathy Stegenga

John S. Vero, Chairman (Labor Relations Advisory)
Leigh J. Benton, Joel Sierra, Kevin W. Hines, Michael D. Paduch

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Katie Bonelli, Majority Leader
Barry Cheney, Legislator
James D. O'Donnell, Legislator
Rob Sassi, Legislator
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
Harold Porr, Deputy County Executive
Langdon Chapman, County Attorney
Steven M. Gross, Commissioner, Human Resources
Donna McCarey, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources
Tamara Hunter, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources
Alison Tyack, Director of Personnel Management, Human Resources
Molly O'Donnell, Personnel Management Technician, Human Resources
John McCarey, Director, Real Property Tax Service
Nicole Anderson, Acting Director, Community Development
Bill Fiovoranti, Director, Economic Development
Deborah Slesinski, Deputy Budget Director
Tim Tucker, Budget Analyst
Deanna Crawford, Budget Analyst
Gretchen Riordan, Budget Analyst
Marie Abbruzzese, Senior Budget Technician
Barbara Davis, Account Clerk, Budget

Mr. Vero called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. All members were present with the exception of Legislators Hines and Paduch who were absent.

Ms. Stegenga moved the request authorizing the making of an agreement between the County of Orange and the County Employees' Unit of the Orange County Chapter of the Civil Service Employees' Association, Inc., in relation to the terms and conditions of employment, seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Mr. Gross explained that this was a successor agreement to the previous contract. The contract is a five-year contract and will run from 2019 to 2023. He pointed out that this is the first time in his career in Orange County Government that we settled a union contract for the CSEA prior to its expiration. The average percentage for an employee during the duration of this contract is 2.75%, 3% in 2019, 2.75% in 2020, 2.5% in 2021, 2.25% in 2022 and 3.25% in 2023. He stated that it was important to understand for purposes related to the contract, 1% on the county payroll equals \$1 million, plus or minus. Mr. Gross provided a handout which was a breakdown of the costs (see original minutes). In this new contract every county employee will be contributing to their health insurance. Mr. Gross took a moment to thank members of the CSEA Union and stated that they did a wonderful job working with them and everything was straight forward. The approximate cost of the entire contract to the County is \$10,750,000. He added that the union passed the contract last Friday and the vote was 3 to 1.

Motion carried, all in favor. (Personnel and Compensation)

Motion carried, all in favor. (Labor Relations Advisory)

Mr. Benton moved the request for an Act inserting a new salary list for certain Orange County employees not included in the negotiating unit represented by the County Employees' Unit of the Orange County Chapter of the CSEA, Inc., seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Gross explained that there is a class of employees that are deemed management and confidential who are tied to the union and are not union members. Whatever settlement the union receives, these employees received it also. They follow the union salary schedule.

Ms. Tautel asked for clarification because they approved raises retroactively from March 2018 for 2019 budget and on top of that there was a separate budget line for raises so she wanted to know what the difference was.

Mr. Gross explained that it was a different class of employees. They have roughly 150 managers that are under the management plan and they are the only ones entitled to any type of merit. These positions are not tied to that. These are management confidential so he understood if there was a little confusion. These are positions in the county that do not fall within the union.

Ms. Tautel recalled the titles from the budget book and requested to have the list that was provided adjusted to include the six-digit code.

Mr. Gross replied he would be happy to do that for her.

Mr. Sierra stated that they do the same in Middletown. He noted that even the elected officials follow the contract for CSEA. He asked if this group of people fell within the \$10,750,000.

Mr. Gross replied yes it does.

Motion carried, all in favor with the exception of Ms. Tautel who abstained. (Personnel and Compensation)

Motion carried, all in favor. (Labor Relations Advisory)

Mr. Faggione moved the request for an Act substituting new salary schedules therein applicable to all employees of the County of Orange who are included in the negotiating unit represented by the County Employee's Unit of the Orange County Chapter of the Civil Service Employees' Association Inc., seconded by Mr. Sierra.

Mr. Gross explained that this applies the percentages to the salary schedule. Within the contract book there are calculations that need to be calculated, put together and ready for the next Legislative Session

Motion carried, all in favor. (Personnel and Compensation)

Motion carried, all in favor. (Labor Relations Advisory)

On the motion of Mr. Sierra, seconded by Mr. Benton, the Labor Relations Advisory Committee meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Chairman Vero continued with the Personnel and Compensation Committee agenda calling the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m.

Mr. Faggione moved to approve the request confirmation of appointment of Deborah Slesinski as Budget Director of the Orange County Department of Budget, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Porr explained that when former Budget Director, Neil Blair announced his retirement, they started the search process and advertised. They interviewed about 8 people or maybe more and it turns out they found what they needed right in their own back yard. Ms. Slesinski has mastered the budget skills needed to get the job done as Director.

Chairman Vero stated that they worked closely with Debbie during budget time and throughout the year. He stated that he was very pleased and supported her wholeheartedly.

Mr. Benton concurred with Chairman Vero's remarks and she has always worked well with him as Chairman of Ways and Means. He added that it was great working with her during the last budget season.

Ms. Tautel stated that Ms. Slesinski was very patient and very kind with all of them during the budget process and thanked her for that. It made the process for them a lot easier, especially for the newer Legislators. She was in full support of this appointment.

Mr. Sierra concurred with Ms. Tautel's statement. He stated that it was their first time going through the budget process and Ms. Slesinski is well versed, she knows the budget inside and

out and she was ready with the answers. He thanked Ms. Slesinski for making the process a little easier.

Ms. Stegenga thanked Ms. Slesinski and felt it was a great choice.

Mr. Porr pointed out that the Budget Department is going through a major transformation and announced that Tim Tucker is leaving in June. Deanna Crawford who worked in the Department of Public Works and Gretchen Riordan who was with the Health Department are new budget analysts in the Budget Department. They are putting together a new team and everything is falling into place.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved to approve the request confirmation of appointment of Nicole Andersen as Director of the Orange County Department of Community Development, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Porr pointed out that on Ms. Andersen's resume there is a notation that says she was a consultant for grant writing at present and that is not accurate. She has not been doing consulting for that agency for at least two years.

Ms. Andersen clarified that she stopped at least two and a half years ago before she came to the county.

Mr. Vero asked if the agency still existed.

Ms. Anderson responded that it does. She was doing consulting work, 1099 forms for example.

Mr. Vero stated that it was mentioned to him that this could be a conflict of interest having done that work and still actively doing it.

Mr. Porr mentioned that they looked into it today and he received a phone call and they confirmed with Nicole that it was not the case.

Mr. Porr continued that when Rich Mayfield left the department as Director, he gave them two weeks notice and the department needs a lot of attention. Not only did Mr. Mayfield leave but everyone else who had been with Community Development left except for one person, John Ebert, who just retired about a month ago. They lost a massive amount of institutional memory which is now all gone. Nicole has had to go through all the files, she had to hire people and organize things better than they were and she is doing a great job at it.

Mr. Vero noted that he was happy to see that they were promoting from within, for this appointment and the previous one.

Ms. Bonelli stated that as a long standing committee member of the Community Development Advisory Committee to work with Nicole when she first came in, she was baptized by fire but she rose to the challenge. The Community Development Advisory Committee fully supported

Nicole for this position. The County Executive probably received a letter from them back when they started to look for a permanent placement for Director. Peter Tuohy, who also sits on the committee was not present today but shares her same sentiments.

Ms. Tautel asked for clarification on dates of when Ms. Andersen was interim Director of Community Development and Director of Grants and Ms. Andersen clarified for her.

Motion carried. All in favor

Mr. Faggione moved the request to reallocate the Assistant Director of Real Property Tax Service from a Grade 22 to a Grade 23, seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Mr. McCarey stated that his Deputy Director, Eric Ruscher, has been with the Real Property Department for **16 ½ years. He is key to their operation and hopefully someday he will take his position.** By someday, it may be by the end of this year or even sooner. He was an assessor in the Town of Woodbury for seven years prior to coming to the county. He hand picked Eric to come to the county. He took a civil service test and became his Assistant Director. He has been at the cap of his salary for about seven or eight years. There are people in his department that make more than the Assistant Director does so he felt it was only proper to move up a grade. This was a result of a desk audit and Human Resources was in agreement with his recommendation and so was the County Executive's office.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that he worked with Mr. Ruscher for about ten years and he does a fantastic job. He is always available anytime and one of the hardest working county employees we have and this is long, long overdue.

Motion carried. All in favor.

On the motion of Ms. Tautel, seconded by Mr. Benton, the meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.