



MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022, 4:30 PM
AMENDED
Virtual Meeting. Public may join via Zoom.**

A. ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION.

I. This item contains Zoom information, instructions, and a link to the Virtual Comment Form.

B. ROLL CALL.

I. Members: Ald. Bill Galvin, Ald. Brian Johnson, Ald. Jesse Brunette, Ald. Jim Hutchison

Present: Jim Hutchison, Jesse Brunette, Bill Galvin, Excused: Brian Johnson

Others Present: Ald. Mark Steuer, Ald. Jennifer Grant, Ald. Melinda Eck, Mayor Eric Genrich, Police Chief Chris Davis, Fire Chief David Litton, Finance Director Diana Ellenbecker, City Attorney Joanne Bungert, Public Works Director Steve Grenier, Park, Recreation and Forestry Director Dan Ditscheit, Chief of Operations Joseph Faulds, Purchasing Manager Thomas Walenski, Police Captain Ben Allen, Human Resources Manager Melanie Falk and others.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Jim Hutchison to approve the agenda.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

I. Approval of the minutes from May 24, 2022.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Jim Hutchison to approve.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

E. REGULAR BUSINESS.

I. Consideration with possible action on the request to fill the following replacement positions and all subsequent vacancies resulting from internal transfers.

- a. Arborist II - Park, Recreation & Forestry
- b. Parking Maintenance Technician - Public Works
- c. Battalion Chief - Fire

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Jim Hutchison to approve the request to fill the Arborist II vacancy and all subsequent vacancies resulting from internal transfers.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

Moved by Ald. Jim Hutchison, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to approve the request to fill the Parking Maintenance Technician vacancy and all subsequent vacancies resulting from internal transfers.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

Moved by Ald. Jim Hutchison, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to approve the request to fill the Battalion Chief vacancy and all subsequent vacancies resulting from internal transfers.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

2. Consideration with possible action to over hire one sergeant position through September 8, 2022.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Jim Hutchison to approve.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

3. Request for update and feedback on the Remote Work Policy with the possibility for revision.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Bill Galvin to hold this item until the next Personnel Committee meeting with a request that staff provide the following:

- a. Summary of the employee survey results
- b. Current remote work policy
- c. Number of employees that have left the City prior to retirement age and a summary of the reasons for leaving

Motion passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

4. Request for consideration and approval to award a 3-year contract for Human Resources Benefit Administration Software (RFP #2022-11) to Bentek for the estimated amount of \$182,710.

Moved by Ald. Jesse Brunette, seconded by Ald. Jim Hutchison to approve.

Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

F. INFORMATIONAL.

I. Report of routine personnel actions for regular employees.

Moved by Ald. Jim Hutchison, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to receive and place on file.
Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

2. Next meeting date: July 26, 2022.

G. ADJOURNMENT.

Moved by Ald. Jim Hutchison, seconded by Ald. Jesse Brunette to adjourn.
Motion Passed.

Yes- Bill Galvin, Jesse Brunette, Jim Hutchison, No- None, Abstain- None.

VERBATIM MINUTES

- We'll start with roll call Alder Johnson is excused. Alder Brunette.
- Here.
- Alder Hutchinson.
- Here.
- I'm also here. So we have a quorum and I'll entertain a motion on the agenda.
- Move to approve.
- Second.
- All those in favor, say aye,
- Aye.
- That passes unanimously. Is anyone or has everyone been able to look at the minutes and do they have any questions? If not, I will entertain a motion.
- Will do approve.
- Second.
- All those in favor, say aye.
- Aye.
- And that passes is unanimously. On to regular business, number one consideration with possible action on the request to fill the following placement positions and all subsequent vacancies resulting from internal transfers. The first one is A an arborist, two for park recreation and forestry. Does anyone have any questions for staff? If not, I'll entertain a motion.
- Move to approve.

- Second.
- All those in favor, say aye.
- Aye.
- That passes unanimously. Parking maintenance technician for public works, item number B if same thing, if no questions for staff, I'll entertain a motion.
- Also move.
- Second.
- All those in favor. Say aye.
- Aye.
- And that passes. Item C battalion chief for the fire department Again, if no questions for staff, I'll entertain a motion.
- Move to approve. Also move.
- Second
- All Right, right. Have a motion and a second. All those in favor, say aye.
- Aye.
- And that passes unanimously. On item number two, consideration with possible action to over hire one Sergeant position through September 8th, of 2022. Does anyone want to hear from the Chief or the representative from the police department?
- Chairman Galvin, just to have Chief give like a two or three minute overview, just so I make sure I'm on the same page with him.
- Sure. Chief Davis.
- Yep. Absolutely. So we are anticipating a Sergeant retiring in September, that is this September 8th date. And we have just established a sergeant's eligibility list. We also have a Sergeant who is on light duty right now. And so we're short a Sergeant. And so the plan here would be to over hire up until that Sergeant retires on September 8th. So we can start training the new Sergeant right now and relieve some of that pressure on night shift. We actually anticipate this will either be cost neutral or maybe even save us money because we can recoup the \$1,146 extra. This will cost us in two Sergeant overtime shift and we're shorthanded enough on sergeants right now that we're having even a hard time getting people to take the overtime. So I anticipate this will actually save us some money.
- I, I have no questions that makes sense to me.
- Me too.

- It certainly does. To me, it's been, I've been an advocate of over-hiring in the police department, even the fire department, the amount of training it takes to get someone on the road by themselves. I do have a question for Captain Allen. Ben, are, are you kidding me? Nobody wants overtime?

- I know it's been such a shift and during your career as well, but yeah, it's, it's an issue. And I think the base issue we're having is it's burnout. People have worked so much overtime as we're scrambling to fill positions, that's become an issue.

- All right. And hence, you know, this is for further consideration in the future chief and, No, it's not, is it Director Faulds, I keep forgetting? Whatever. Okay. Well, but anyway, you know, the, the issue I brought up before about over-hiring, you know, is, is the juice worth to squeeze. And I think when you think about the amount of overtime and what we're hearing now about burnout, and I know it's hard to get staffed. So, you know, it's just something that we ought to be thinking about. Not five years down the road, but within the near future. So I'll entertain a motion.

- Move to approve.

- I'll second.

- All those in favor, say aye.

- Aye

- Passes unanimously. All right. On to item three, request for update and feedback on the remote work policy with possible revision. I think this was Alder Grant or Alder Eck that requested this.

- Yes, it was myself.

- All right. Would you like to explain to us what you're really looking for here? Or you want to hear what staff has to say first?

- Yeah. If I can just hear what staff has to say if that's okay, please.

- All right. Thank you.

- Yeah. So now I didn't do a lot of digging into this, but one thing I can say is we did have an employee survey come out or that we administered a couple months ago. And there was a lot of positive feedback on flexible schedules. Along with remote work. Employees really liked working from home between one and three days a week. We've allowed most employees are eligible to work remotely to work remotely, if they have performance evaluation that meets expectations or is higher, if they have a job that allows them, you know, that doesn't have a lot of face to face contact day to day responsibilities. So for the past, I think it's been implemented the policy itself, maybe it's got to be less than a year, but we've obviously been working remotely since the start of pandemic in 2020. And there hasn't a lot of issues or concerns that have come up. I've heard a lot of positive feedback from employees. So from, from that perspective, it's been a really positive response, but we're always open to feedback or looking at the policy to make it better or to make improvements to it.

- All right. Thank you. Alder Grant

- Okay. I just, yeah. Wanted a little bit about update because I have heard some complaints from constituents about people not being available. So I just wanted to hear where we were at as a city.

- Alder Brunette.

- Yeah. Thank you, Chairman. Just right off the bat, Director Faulds, It would've been helpful if you would've had the, and I know maybe you didn't talk to Alder Grant and come to this conclusion, but if you were to include the work policy in the meeting agenda, that that way we can kind of look, especially with the new members to actually see what we have. So when this past, I know what was it a half a year ago, year ago.

- About that? Yeah.

- You know, it was a skeptical yes. I ended up supporting it because we were still in COVID and it seemed like a lot of employers were doing this, including my own. So I didn't want to be a hypocrite. But one thing that I did request back then was that if you could update the council, if things that came up because of remote work policies only so as good as the managers that are in charge of the employees, that report to them, meaning making sure deadlines get met and that there are no concerns for productivity. I will say from what I've read, and I'm not an expert in your field Director Faulds, but from what I've read, many employers are actually moving a bit away from remote work. Not all, obviously, cause some will always have remote work. But I do think that there's a bit of a shift to kind of go back into the office and, and especially in our area, our industry, if you can call it that local government is serving people. And I think that the general public, although a remote work could be a bit of a perk and a good thing for employees, it can also be abused. And I think from what I'm hearing more and more from the public is the, the, the feeling that city workers should be back in the office. I I'm going to say something and I don't want this to be taken the wrong way, but it's just my experience that when I have been calling into city hall the last month or two seems very hard, it seems a lot harder to get ahold of people than it ever has been. So then it makes me wonder is, and not all city employees, but there are a number. And that makes me think, is there something there that maybe the council should be aware of as we look at possibly revising that? So that's my concern. Anyways So those are my comments.

- Does anyone else have any comments or questions? I would, if none, I would have to say when I've been calling in the city hall and let's face it, we all live in the U.S of A., we all want instantaneous service. And when we place a phone call, we want someone to answer or to get back to us as quickly as possible. I have run into some situations where that person I've been calling is not in their office. They leave a message on their machine that they are working remotely and the best way to get a hold of them is through email. Well then I have to go dig up an email, write that up. And I got to send that in. And not everybody is instantaneously responsive to emails. I have been meaning to get a hold of Mike Ron and see if there is a way of setting up so that phones can be phone call into that city hall number can be shunted directly to that person's cell phone or landline, whatever at, at wherever they're working out of. The privilege when I was at the police department of having flexible schedules, I had a report every day, but I had a flexible schedule. And I can't tell you how much that meant to mean that. I mean, the chief was, he wanted eight and a half hours. He got eight and a half hours, but if I took a two hour lunch because I went home and took care of my child or something like that, it just meant a lot more to me. And I, I think I was more productive. I was happier. And, and so I can see where some of this is, is good for our, the morale and for the work in climate. But I, I, I would like to see more responsiveness, I guess, in, in situations where the phones are being used. And-and I don't know if something can be done about that or not, but like Alder Brunette has said, you know, you call in, we want to talk to someone and if they're not there, then we want to be directed to someone that can help us out. There's nothing a phone chain and ending up not getting the questions answered that you need answered. And that's, that's, I guess that's my only beef about, you know, the remote work.

- Alder Brunette

- Well, it would Director Faulds, I know you and I had emailed about this, but that, that employee survey, it would really be nice to see what the data indicates. Cause again, I, I agree with what you're probably saying. You're saying I is that some employees really like this and value this, especially in a tough job market, but I've also had some conversations with city employees who are not too keen on the remote work policy. I don't think they, they feel frustrated with some of their coworkers who are working that to them again, to them. It feels like they're having to carry more of the burden for in-office work. And I certainly don't want to assume that all are really big on this policy. So is it possible you can share that data cause I know you were going to

work with the mayor on what that indicated, but can you make that available to the council to review the comments?

- Yeah, so I, I, what we'll have is the summary of the data and we can submit that to the, the council that's being worked on with myself and the mayor right now we should have that done the next week or so. And I guess maybe one comment to that is we don't, you know, I guess my perspective is I don't really want to make policy decisions based off what a few or, or some people are saying. You know, I know there's always going to be people that are for or against it, but if there's a few people that are against it because you know, that think it's unfair to them. That doesn't mean we should, you know upend the whole policy or make changes because it's not good for one or two people. We really want to make sure that it's, you know, the information we're getting and it's maybe a problem for the majority, you know, not just one or two people, but for all the Alders that brought up the responsiveness, I think it'd be really helpful for me to know, you know, what departments are having with this? What time of day are you calling? What type of customers like are, is it the business community? Is it just regular citizens? That kind of information will be helpful because the main priority from our perspective is customer service. Whether you're working from home or working in the office, you have to be responsive to the community, to the elders, to your coworkers. So that's really what we strive for. And one little thing I'll add is when we're able to work remotely, what I've been finding is if someone calls and they can't get ahold of someone, they're like, ah, they must be not responsive, but maybe they're on vacation. You know, maybe they're just have a day off. And if we didn't have a, if we didn't have a receipt and you couldn't get ahold of someone, you went those thoughts, wouldn't go through your head. You're just like, oh, maybe they're out of the office today. But now that we have the, the remote work policy, people kind of jump to that conclusion right away when really they could be in a meeting, they could be doing something else work related, but they're just unavailable. But being responsive is a huge priority and we'll continue to work at that.

- Is, are, are you finished Alder Brunette?

- Oh, I'm sorry. I'm just staring. I'm fine. Thank you.

- Oh okay. Alder Steuer and then Alder Grant.

- Thank you chair. I think one of the issues ahead I'm going to piggyback on what Alder Galvin said. You know, I worked at city hall for 25 years too, so I have a, kind of a feel for things there, but I struggle at times when I call I'll call planning and I'll, I'll try to call direct lines and I'll call three or four people and they're either not in the office or they're out somewhere. Sometimes I just call anybody in the office just to get ahold of them and say, is somebody here? And I'm not, I'm not poking fun or anything like that. But I think one of the problems is that we don't have a schedule or we don't under stuff is who isn't in the office. Who can we talk to? Who is, who's a go-to person. Maybe there should be one or two people in the office that you could contact and they could connect you right away. So I'm just saying, I think it could be done better. I realize you're mixing virtual with in person, you know, we're the committee I'm on ins and in parks, we're meeting in person. And, and I love the fact that we're meeting in person again. So that that's that one fact, but I just think it could be better. You know, we have that manual with all the phone numbers, but you know, you could call four or five numbers and, and after a while you get a little frustrated and you just go, eh, whatever, we'll get, we'll get it later or email. And then you do email and, you know, Fridays, it's half a day. And a lot of times there's a lot of things that are going on that you want to get ahold of. So you got to really scramble around in the morning to take care of that. And anyhow, those just a few of my comments, just food for thought. So thank you.

- Alder Grant and then Alder Brunette.

- Thank you. Yeah. And that's, I, again, I completely understand the flexibility and the perk of having that and the advantage as an employee. But I also, I know peop- residents have an expectation, especially since it's their tax dollars going into it. And I have heard a lot of frustration over the phones not being answered immediately. And I think when you have an issue with your house or something, you're calling into a department and you're waiting for a phone call and it's consistently that that's where the frustration comes in. I know like Alder

brunettes said a lot of businesses have been going back to in person. I know some businesses are even offering that flexibility, but reducing it down to one or two days a month and kind of, I guess having some limitations. So I didn't know if at some point we could look at a plan to slowly phase back a little bit more full time into in person, whether in person one day of flexibility, because a lot of employers actually don't have that flexibility. So again, I do think having some is a good compromise, knowing that there are places that aren't allowing that at all at this point.

- Alder Brunette.

- Yeah. One thing I, I don't want to do is, is rush or make a rash decision because we obviously have city employees even on this call right now in the zoom meeting that have grown accustomed to this. And it is a good life work balance for them. And maybe one of the reasons why they're continuing. So I don't want to just make a rash decision in either way. So I I'm going to make a motion and hope- hopefully the committee supports it. And if I could, after I make the motion, if it's second, I'd like to explain it a little more. I like to make a motion to hold this until our next meeting. So that, and then, and then have the employee satisfaction results shared with the council before we make this decision, as well as including the current remote work policy with the, the next meeting agenda.

- I'll second that with an addendum to that, that we get some information from HR on employees who have left before retirement age. And if they're able to share some of the reasons why they left, I, you know, I don't think we should all jump off the cliff because everyone else does. I understand our employees, if I remember correctly are making about 50%, they're, they're in the 50 percentile for, for wages. So, you know, what, what is it that keeps them happy and keeps them working for our, our city and doing the good job that they do. So like you're saying Alder Brunette. I wouldn't want to pull the rug out from underneath, everybody and, and ruin a good thing that's going to hurt us in the long run as opposed to making other people feel good because people are working in the office. Like I said before, I had a flexible schedule. If I'd been held to that, it would've made my life a lot harder and it would've made a lot harder for me to do my job. So I-I- I think we have to be forward looking when, when we're thinking about our employees and the work environment that we're creating for them to work in, we want them to be happy. We want them to stay here and we want them to give us a hundred percent when they are here. So, you know, I just, I, I, I agree, Alder, Brunette I think we need to tread carefully on this and, and that's why I'm going to second holding it until our next meeting.

- Yeah, so a motion then to hold until our next personnel meeting and, and with the request that human resources provide more information to us to make a better decision.

- Exactly.

- Sound right.

- Okay. Thank you.

- What was the amendment?

- The amendment was that we find out how many employees are leaving before retirement age. And if, if, if HR is able to share with us why they're leaving.

- Okay.

- So does that need to be seconded or approved?

- No, I-I seconded it. So what we'll do is there's no other comments or questions then we'll, we'll have a vote now guys in favor, say aye.

- Aye.

- Aye.

- That passes unanimously. On to item number four, request approval to award a three year contract for human resources, benefit administration software and our RFP numbers down there to Ben Tech for the estimated amount of \$182,710 is that-

- I can get started.

- Oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

- I'll get it started. I'll give us a little bit of background here. So last year we approved this in the budget with the health fund and is approved during our budget process in September. When we always go over the benefit health fund 701 fund does in September. So really what this is, is a software to help with, you know, open enrollment, to be a little bit user friendly for our employees to help our HR and city staff administer the benefits throughout the year. So the RFP, we had two response, two responses, one was SellerX and one was Bentech. Ben Tech is more costly, but had a much higher score than SellerX. One of the reasons why we wanted to go with Bentech is because of their, they really had a detailed implementation program and the ongoing customer support for our employees and for the city going forward, they had, it looks like it appears to be really good features that reconciled bills at this time, reconciling bills is a manual process with our HR and administrative staff. So we're hoping that this feature can really cut down on that manual time to do that. And then there's also some other edited features of helping with our retirees. It's called retire, retire suite. I don't know a lot about it, but it looks like it'd be a good feature for retirees to see what their retirement plans would be and also what the premiums would be. And if they retire and have a different healthcare plan through the city, once they retire. So, like I said, we budgeted in the health fund. I believe it was about 50 before this type of program. And we thought that the program would start in the spring. That's why the, the budgeted number was about 54,000. It looks like if we do go forward with this, we would start in about August. So we would have enough funds to fund it for the rest of the year, because I do believe sample contract that they've provided that we could pay on a monthly basis for that or 54,000. So I know this is kind of a abstract concept and we talked about it, you know, in the fall of last year. So if anyone has any questions about it, but really it boils down to having a better user experience for enrollment, for benefits for our employees. And then also just cutting down on manual processes of administering the benefits throughout the year.

- I would have to say that based on my experience as a retiree, it, we can do better. So, I mean, I, I agree with digital, any other questions?

- I do if I could?

- Yeah, sure. Alder Brunette.

- Obviously, you know, in our, in our field, we typically try to get the lowest cost for the same level of service, but we also know that when we go out to bid that lowest company is not always the best option. So if I'm reading this correct Director Faulds, the evaluation scoring with the three members that they actually scored this other vendor higher, even though the cost was higher. Is that correct?

- That's correct. And I can just say one thing about the, as all the services are in that lump sum fee, whereas the other vendor also had some additional features for an additional fee. So if you kind of get apples to apple cost, it would be similar with the same feature.

- Okay. Alright, thank you. No other questions.

- Yeah. I, I think Joel, we had whoever administered the insurance program this year, I think it didn't, it fail. And we had to go back to our old vendor.

- Or something.

- So that was, so you're talking about, I think.

- The health insurance.

- Personal benefit accounts.

- Yeah.

- Yeah. That was in 2020, I think the end of 2020, not a fun time to implement that, but yes, that was during 2020 and 2021 where our per-personal benefit accounts and is through, we had a shift, there was a merger and the company got acquired. Transition was not good. And now we went to a different provider EBC that, so that's a little different than what we're talking about right now. We'll still be using that vendor. This software is going to be more of helping monitor the, the benefits and the bills throughout the year. So this software will help with the billing with those type of vendors.

- Okay. All right. Very good. If there's no other questions, I'll entertain a motion.

- Would it approve

- Second.

- All those in favor, say aye.

- Aye

- And that passes unanimously onto informational. Does anyone have any questions on the report of routine personal actions for regular employees? If not, I think we can receive and place on file.

- So move.

- All those in favor. Say aye.

- Aye.

- That passes also unanimously. And next meeting is July 26th, 2022. I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

- Move.

- All right. All those in favor, say aye.

- Aye.

- All right. You guys want to get right into it then? Or take five?

- I had somebody text me who wanted to attend the finance meeting. So maybe like can kind of reset, while I

- Okay. We can, we can stay on this zoom.

- Nope. Nope. You, you go down, you leave and then you leave the meeting and then you jump in because the other one's got different codes and everything.
- I gotcha. I misunderstood what you were saying. Okay.
- All right. Maybe 5, 5 0 2, somewhere in there.
- All right. See everybody in a little bit.
- Okay.