

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

5:45 p.m., Tuesday, July 12, 2011

The regular meeting of the Personnel Committee was held at 5:45 p.m., Tuesday, July 12, 2011 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bettelli and Piening, Chair Thomas, City Administrator Tucker, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland. A quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Thomas called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 4, 2011 as submitted; Councilmember Piening seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments** – None

4. **Old Business** – None

5. **New Business**

Discussion of Modifications to Assistant to the Administrator and Communications and Website Coordinator Job Description

Chair Thomas stated that Administrator Tucker had mentioned to him some time ago that she wanted to “tweek” the job description for the position of Assistant to the Administrator and Communications and Website Coordinator. He commented that he saw what was presented as a major re-write, not a “tweaking,” and he indicated that he did not see the need for the change.

Administrator Tucker stated that, when she spoke with the Chair initially, she had not reviewed the existing job description in quite some time, but she was aware that the primary focus, when it was written, had been to have one (1) person assigned to manage the City's website and to aid the City Administrator in her responsibilities. The Administrator stated that she has tried to ensure that someone was adequately trained to provide continuity in the department in her absence; therefore, she has treated the position as if it were an Assistant Administrator's position. Upon reviewing the existing job description, the Administrator stated that she realized that it no longer reflects the duties and responsibilities of the position. Administrator Tucker emphasized that she was not suggesting the creation of a new position, but that the website coordinator's duties would remain a facet of the job – not a primary focus for the job. The modifications presented to the Committee were an attempt on the part of the Administrator to more accurately describe the job functions for the position as they have evolved over the past four (4) years. Additionally, the Administrator noted that having an Assistant Administrator does not negate City Council's authority to hire whomever they choose to fill a vacant Administrator's position; Council could promote from within or seek applications from the outside.

Administrator Tucker explained that Emily Dziuban's decision to rescind her resignation in no way related to the changes being proposed; she recounted that she had approached the Chair

prior to any knowledge the Ms. Dziuban was considering leaving the City's employ. The Administrator did state that she thought the importance of accurately describing the job was heightened by the prospect of advertising for the position to draw and hire the right kind of person to perform all of the functions for which this position is now responsible.

Chair Thomas drew on his background and stated that "good people" do the job that is put before them with or without a job description; he stated that, in his experience, a job description was often an encumbrance.

Administrator Tucker stated that job descriptions were part of the City's process; job descriptions are in place for every position in the City. The Administrator noted that, as she contemplated advertising for a replacement, the current job description was not suitable or descriptive of the functions and demands of the position; it did not fit the type of person she would be seeking to fill the position.

The Administrator re-stated that believes that General Government and the Administrator's position should have an assistant's position, that she is not looking to add a position to General Government and that she was accurately portraying the job as it functions today. In addition, Administrator Tucker indicated that the position would be expense neutral to the City because the starting salary being proposed is the salary that is in place now.

Councilmember Bettelli recalled that, when the job description was originally established, the emphasis had been on the City's website and website management because of criticism from the community and media. He also recalled that discussions had taken place on whether the title should be Assistant Administrator or Assistant to the Administrator; because the focus had been the website, the decision was Assistant to the Administrator. Councilmember Bettelli also recounted that the Personnel Committee, in its evaluations of the Administrator, had indicated that the City Administrator needed to find ways to operate more efficiently, and, in his opinion, having a true Assistant Administrator was another step toward achieving that goal. In addition, he expressed the idea that the Assistant Administrator would more effectively represent the City to other local governments than the Assistant to the Administrator. Councilmember Bettelli concluded by stating that "assisting and helps and aids are a lot different from performs, and it is time for us to have an Assistant Administrator."

Responding to Chair Thomas' concern about the website, the Administrator read the following from the proposed job description:

Performs all duties related to communications to include all functionality and content of the City's website, news releases, coordination among various media outlets, development of all ads, photographs, scripts, videos, digital archives (photos and articles), pamphlets and other promotional material as required.

As stated, maintenance of the website becomes one (1) of the many responsibilities assigned to the position.

Chair Thomas then posed the situation whereby the Assistant Administrator is assigned many more responsibilities with greater priority than maintaining the website; would the City again need to hire someone?

Administrator Tucker replied that she does not anticipate that happening; she stated that, in her eleven (11) years with the City, she has added one (1) person to the General Government Department. She stated that her track record as a manager is one of coaching and developing new skills among the employees she has, rather than hiring additional personnel. The Administrator stated that the only way she could foresee hiring additional personnel in General Government would be for City Council to assign new duties for which the City does not already have qualified people to do them. Having said that, the Administrator pointed out that the proposed job description is a paper change only; it does not reflect a change in function, salary or responsibility.

Councilmember Piening remarked that the salaries were not the same on the existing job description and the proposed job description; Administrator Tucker clarified that the starting salary for the Assistant Administrator is the current expense of the Assistant to the Administrator to the City; therefore, there is no new expense to the City. The Administrator agreed that the low, mid and high range for the Assistant Administrator position are approximately thirty-five hundred dollars (\$3,500) higher than on the Assistant to the Administrator.

Councilmember Piening noted that Assistant Dziuban had resigned her position and that resignation had been accepted by the Administrator. The Administrator added that Assistant Dziuban has since rescinded her resignation. Councilmember Piening asked for clarification of the City's policy when an employee resigns; Administrator Tucker stated that she has the authority to accept a rescission if the person is still employed. Councilmember Piening asked where that authority was documented, to which Administrator Tucker responded that she has the ability as the City Administrator to manage General Government by making hiring and firing decisions within that department.

Councilmember Piening asked if he was correct in assuming that, if the proposed job description is approved, the job would be Ms. Dziuban's; Administrator Tucker agreed. The Councilmember expressed concern that an employee had resigned and was back in the position and now a new job description was being proposed for the position. He indicated that he did not think a city of forty-five hundred (4,500) people and seven (7) miles long needed an Assistant Administrator's position. Councilmember Piening remarked that the City has excellent Department Managers who are more than capable of functioning well when the City Administrator is out of town for a week or more.

The Administrator agreed with the Councilmember that the City has excellent Department Managers, but reminded him that General Government is also a separate department of the City. Administrator Tucker also restated that each of the City's departments has an assistant so that a clear chain of command exists when the department manager is away. The Administrator also repeated that the concept of a modified job description was brought to the Chair before Ms. Dziuban requested to rescind her resignation; the thought of advertising for a replacement made the need for the changes more pronounced.

Councilmember Piening commented that, based on the amount of "red-lining," the Assistant Administrator job description is essentially a new position replacing an old position, and, as such, it should be made available for new applicants.

Administrator Tucker reiterated that, until she reviewed the existing job description, she did not realize how inadequately it described how the job functions today; in the Administrator's opinion, a major re-write was necessary to put the job description in congruence with the job as it is today.

In conclusion, Councilmember Piening stated that he would vote against the proposed job description; he does not see the need for a change.

On the contrary, Councilmember Bettelli stated that the whole of City Council should have the opportunity to review and discuss the proposed change.

MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to recommend to City Council approval of the modifications to the job description for Assistant to the Administrator and Communications and Website Coordinator.

Councilmember Thomas suggested that, as the Administrator anticipated replacing Ms. Dziuban, she saw the need to revise the job description to attract the right person, but that did not happen and the right person is in place.

Councilmember Piening added that, in the present economic market, there are many, many qualified people looking for work, especially in the salary range indicated.

If the salary range was an obstacle to approval, Administrator Tucker stated that she would be willing to change the salary ranges to those on the original job description.

On the issue of whether City Council should review the proposed job description, Councilmember Piening expressed his disagreement with Councilmember Bettelli by stating that the Personnel Committee is doing its job by screening issues so that everything does not have to go to the full Council. Councilmember Piening remarked that every Council member can make a motion.

MOTION: With no second, the motion FAILED.

6. Miscellaneous Business

Next meeting date: 5:45 p.m., Tuesday, August 9, 2011

7. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Piening moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Marie Copeland, City Clerk