

September 8, 2012

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To: The Merit Board

From: Jim Mowrey

MEETING MINUTES

RE: REVISIONS TO THE CITY CODE, CHAPTER 50 – PERSONNEL

A meeting was held at city hall on September 5, 2012, at the request of Bill Johnsa, City Manager, to present the proposed changes to the Code and Personnel Manual to the Merit Board and to the Executive Secretary.

ATTENDEES: City Manager Bill Johnsa, Councilman Tim Dunn, Police Chief Bruce Hedley, Human Resources Director Lynn Smith, City Attorney Richard Carothers, all members of the Merit Board, and the Executive Secretary.

The meeting was opened at 7:03 pm by Chairperson Joette Segars.

OLD BUSINESS: The Minutes of the Merit Board's organizational meeting of February 9, 2012 were not available, as the Secretary did not bring them to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: Presentation of the revisions to the City Code, Chapter 50 – Personnel by the City Manager and Human Resources Director.

(It should be noted that, approximately one week before the meeting, the City had provided the Merit Board and the Executive Secretary with the revised versions of (1), Article II. – Merit System, and, (2) the Personnel Policies and Procedures manual. Also distributed was a three sheet table summarizing the current duties and responsibilities of the Merit Board compared to the proposed revisions, and detailing 4 duties to be deleted from the Merit Board. The same handout sheet summarized the current duties and responsibilities of the Executive Secretary compared to the proposed revisions, and detailing 9 duties to be deleted from the Secretary and given to the City Manager and Human Resources Director.)

Bill Johnsa began the presentation by stating that it was time for the documents to be updated due to the growth of the city employees and the many state and federal regulations of personnel administration. He stated that it was time for an experienced human resource professional to be given duties that were formerly performed by the Merit Board and Executive Secretary.

Mr. Johnsa further stated that he is a supporter of the Merit Board, and recognizes its worth to the City.

Human Resources Director Smith began a slide show regarding the changes.

The slides began with the historical history: creation of the Merit System, (1974) and its responsibilities. The next slide was a summary of the Executive Secretary's (current) Responsibilities. Councilman Dunn commented that the duties seemed like a full-time job for the Secretary. There were no other comments from the Merit Board or the Secretary regarding this.

The succeeding slides listed the organizational changes with the City Manager form of government in 1999; and, in the succeeding years, conflicting situations arose, including no revision of the Code to reflect the duties delegated to the City Manager in 1999.

Succeeding slides proposed solutions for the redefined roles of Merit Board and Executive Secretary, and the City Manager; to revise the Code and Personnel manual, and obtain HR support. The next slide detailed some of the duties of the new Human Resources professional. There was no response from the Merit Board or the Secretary.

The next slide summarized the revised role of the Merit Board. There were three items remaining after the deletions of four items listed above. There was no response from the Merit Board, and only one response, from the Executive Secretary, questioning the validity of eliminating the role of two members of the Merit Board for its long-standing role in participating in the hiring process for police positions. At this point two members of the Merit Board stated that they thought removing this duty was valid.

The final slide was the proposed Executive Secretary's role per the revised documents. As detailed above, 9 duties of the Executive Secretary were transferred to the Director of Human Resources and/or the City Manager. There were no comments or questions from the Merit Board on these changes.

There was some general comments and dialog between the City and the Merit Board, but of a cordial and neutral nature.

The Executive Secretary remarked that over 80 percent of its duties and responsibilities had been cancelled. The Merit Board members stated that the Executive Secretary's duties were always mostly secretarial anyway, and that he/she was not a member of the Merit Board anyway.

A heated discussion followed on the role of the Executive Secretary. The consensus of the members was that the duties were similar to the City Clerk's role at City Council meetings, and almost nothing else.

The Executive Secretary stated that he felt he had wasted his time coming to this meeting. There was almost no feedback voiced by the Merit Board members regarding these momentous changes to the documents, and no acknowledgement by the Merit Board that the reductions of the duties of the Executive Secretary were more damaging to the

influence of the Merit Board than anything else that happened here tonight. He also noted that recommendations of the Merit Board, whether performed by its own motion or by the investigative duties of the Executive Secretary will now be presented to the City Manager rather than to Mayor and Council.

Jim stated he saw no reason to continue his participation in this matter.

At 8:15pm, Chairperson Segars entertained a motion to adjourn.

Please feel free to insert additions or deletions or any revisions you desire before forwarding to Mayor and Council and the City Manager.

Thank you,

Jim Mowrey