

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
August 6, 2020

Present: Committee Chair, Ed Hollenbeck; Legislator Cliff Balliet; Legislator Tracy Monell; Bethany O'Rourke, Personnel Officer; Amy Poff, Benefits Manager, Linn Bruce, Civil Service Administrator.

Guest: Legislative Chair, Marte Sauerbrey and Legislator Bill Standinger

Absent: Legislator, Dale Weston

The meeting of the Tioga County Personnel Committee was called to order at 10:32 a.m.

I. The Minutes of the July 9, 2020 Personnel Committee meeting were approved as written.

II. Staff Reports

A. Linn Bruce, Civil Service Administrator:

The Head Count Report reflects 386 authorized full-time positions, 354 of those filled, 10 not filled/unfunded and 22 not filled/funded. Part-time shows 70 authorized positions, 55 filled, 3 not filled/unfunded and 12 not filled/funded. Resolution 153-20 increased the Sheriff's Office authorized PT headcount from 7 to 8. Funded vacancies being actively recruited for: Caseworker at DSS; MEO II in Public Works; Deputy Sheriff (2), Corrections Officer, Public Safety Dispatcher/Trainee, Office Specialist II and a PT Cook (2) at the Sheriff's Office. The Backfill Salary Difference Report shows five (5) changes since July's report with a monthly impact of (\$23,400.80) and YTD total \$119,864.70. The Change in Classification Report-Salary Impact and the Temporary Appointments chart show no changes since July.

Linn indicated that there are 57 candidates signed up for the Deputy Sheriff/Police Officer exam. The agilities will be held in Broome County on August 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The written exam will be held on September 26<sup>th</sup>. We are still holding Continuous Recruitment exams.

B. Amy Poff, Benefits Manager:

2020 Health Insurance:

In July \$43,700.57 was paid out the 2020 HRA with four additional employees reaching their deductible. Total HRA paid to date is \$604,122.83 with a total of fifty-five employees reaching their deductible, approximately 55% utilization based on July contract counts.

2019 Health Insurance:

In July, \$3.28 was paid out the 2019 HRA. The total HRA spent is \$878,699.87, approximately 76% utilization.

2021 Workers' Compensation Budget:

Amy entered the 2021 workers' compensation budget with a decrease of \$87,077 to total expenses (excluding salary and fringe costs). The majority of the decrease was to claim indemnity and medical costs based on current claims and medical payments. Increases were made to contracting services, due to change in third-party administrators and insurance costs based on guidance from the broker on industry trends. The total budget figure is comprised of assessments to participants in the self-insured plan and a small portion covered by refund from NYS of prior year's claim expenses. workers' compensation plan. For 2021 there will be a decrease in the NYS refunds due to a claimant's passing; however, there was also a decrease in the indemnity payments. The total budget figure and assessment figure will need to be adjusted for any change for 2021 salary or fringe costs.

Deferred Compensation (457 Plan):

Back in April, Nationwide notified Tioga County regarding various provisions of the CARES ACT of 2020 that we could elect to adopt. At that time the Deferred Compensation committee decided to hold off to see how things played out a little later in the year and also due to the fact that our plan currently does allow for loans. In July, Nationwide reached out to indicate that they were contacted by one of our participants, who was interested in utilizing the provisions of the CARE ACT but is unable to as Tioga County did not adopt them.

The three provisions of the CARES Act affecting retirement plans include:

1. Tax-favored withdrawals up to \$100,000 until December 31, 2020
2. Expanded access to loans from retirement accounts for 180 days after enactment (March 27, 2020 to September 23, 2020)
3. Relief from Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) rules in 2020

Legislature is in agreement to move forward if there is no cost or negative impact to Tioga County if the provisions are adopted. Amy will be confirming this with Nationwide.

Retiree Health Insurance:

There was a discussion last month regarding a scenario of a married couple who both retire from the County and how to best handle their health insurance coverage. Amy and Bethany discussed with Pete and consulted with Earl Redding. Both Pete and Earl are looking into the details further and Amy will come back in September with recommendations.

C. Bethany O'Rourke, Personnel Officer

Budget Tracking Report:

The budget tracking report for end of July 2020 was distributed for review. So far in 2020 we have collected \$2,020.00 (46.7%) of our projected revenues. We have spent 47.5% of our appropriations.

III. Old Business:

Medicare Part B Reimbursement:

Amy wanted to continue the discussion from back in March regarding Medicare Part B Reimbursement. In an effort to streamline the administration of the Medicare Part B reimbursement benefit and to help control costs, Resolution 281-17 was passed in November 2017 setting the reimbursement rate for retirees at \$115/month for 3 years 1/1/2018 – 1/31/2021. Prior to passing the resolution, the Medicare Part B reimbursement for retirees in 2017 ranged from \$108 to \$134. Based on the retirees receiving the benefit at that time (those hired prior to January 1, 2005) that was an average reimbursement of approximately \$111. The Medicare Part B premium increased to \$134 in 2018, \$135.50 in 2019 and \$144.60 in 2020. We currently have 177 retirees collecting this monthly benefit, annual cost of \$244,260. There are additional retirees who will be eligible for this benefit when they turn 65. Discussion will continue next month.

IV. New Business:

2021 Personnel Budget:

Bethany provided the 2021 budget request for review. Of note, the Contracting Services line was reduced \$40,000 compared to 2020 due to the postponement of the NU Salary Study.

V. Resolutions:

- Abolish Vacant Full-time Community Services Worker and Create Full-time Office Specialist I (Social Services): One full-time Community Services Worker position has been vacant within Social Services since June 30, 2020. Upon review of the department's staffing needs, the Commissioner has determined that the vacancy would be better utilized if downgraded to that of an Office Specialist I. This resolution abolishes the vacant full-time Community Services Worker position and creates a full-time Office Specialist I position.
- Create and Fill Seasonal Social Welfare Examiner Position and Seasonal Office Specialist I Positions for the HEAP Program (Social Services): This resolution authorizes the Department of Social Services to create and fill the seasonal HEAP positions as follows: two full-time, seasonal Social Welfare Examiners for the period September 28, 2020 through February 26, 2021 at a starting salary of \$15.03 per hour; one full-time, seasonal Office Specialist I for the period October 13, 2020 through March 26, 2021 at the starting salary of \$12.46 per hour; two full-time, seasonal Office Specialist I for the period October 26, 2020 through February 26, 2021 at a starting salary of \$12.46 per hour; one full-time, seasonal Office Specialist I for the period October 26, 2020 through January 29, 2021 at the starting salary of \$12.46 per hour. NYS minimum wage is scheduled to increase on December 31, 2020 to \$12.50 per hour, the hourly rates for Office Specialist I positions will be adjusted accordingly as of December 31, 2020.
- Authorize Donation of Vacation Days (Motor Vehicle Bureau): Shannon Holcomb, a recently hired Motor Vehicle License Clerk, has recently had unexpected absences for which she has inadequate leave time to cover. Joyce Costantini is interested in donating 4 days of her vacation time to Ms. Holcomb.

Ms. Holcomb shall be required to liquidate all her accrued Sick and Vacation time, but then shall have access to the 4 vacation days donated by Ms. Costantini.

- Standard Workday and Reporting Resolution (Legislature): The New York State Retirement System created new reporting regulations in 2009 that require establishment of terms and work hours for elected and appointed officials and a resolution stating such at the onset of each term. This resolution establishes the standard work days for Part-time Budget Officer, Jackson Bailey, at 6 hours per day 4/13/2020-12/31/2021. The County will report the days worked to the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System.
- Authorize continuance of full-time Highway Worker (Seasonal) Position (Public Works): Resolution 87-20 authorized the creation and filling of a full-time Highway Worker (Seasonal) position for a temporary duration from April 1, 2020 – October 9, 2020. Due to a vacant MEO II position, the Commissioner of Public Works would like to extend the duration of the temp position in order to adequately staff his department. This resolution authorizes the continuance of full-time Highway Worker (Seasonal) position for a maximum of 1500 hours through December 31, 2020

VI. Meeting adjourned at 11:10