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Fwd: HR Minutes 10/12/23

1 message

Danielle Romanowski <fiscalofficer@southrussell.com>
To: Administrative Assistant <adminassist@southrussell.com>

Tue, Oct 24, 2023 at 9:14 AM

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From: **Ruth Cavanagh** <rcavanagh@southrussell.com>

Date: Mon, Oct 23, 2023 at 4:09 PM

Subject: HR Minutes 10/12/23

To: William Koons <mayor@southrussell.com>, Chris Berger <cberger@southrussell.com>, Danielle Romanowski <fiscalofficer@southrussell.com>, Ruth Cavanagh <rcavanagh@southrussell.com>, Michael Rizzo <policechief@southrussell.com>, Street Commissioner <streets@southrussell.com>

Regular meeting of Human Resources Cmte held 10/12/23, at 1pm.

Attending were Mayor Koons, Councilmen Berger & Cavanagh, Fiscal Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo, and Jim Budzik of Mansour Gavin.

Chief Rizzo discussed the proposed Gurney SSO position. Differs from CFHS & MS SRO in that it is more about safeguarding the younger children, and the Gurney building. There will need to be certification on the part of the SSO, within one year, available in Columbus. If the SRO doesn't work out in that position, the individual will become part of regular police force. If the SRO is ill, etc., another Officer would substitute.

The subject of description arose, Jim Budzik recommended stating Expectations and Restrictions, job description is listed as part of an ordinance, not listing. Berger stated 'as assigned' comparing to Marines. All Marines are Riflemen, cooks in the Marines are Riflemen. Process would conclude with Council signing off on the MOU, effective January 1, 2024.

Chief Rizzo requested raising the clothing allowance for officers, to \$1,500 new, FT. FT officers will receive increase from \$800 - 1,200. For PT officers, there will be sliding scale increases of \$100, depending on hours worked.

Generalized discussion about Social Media policy. No complaining, denigrating the Village, Departments, Individuals at all.

Discussion about possibility for Health Insurance for Council members. The renewal is due 12/1/23 for 2024, with a 7.7% increase. This would increase premiums by \$25K. Still in discussion phase, but must be enacted before 12/20/23 (election filing date).

Request for Fiscal Officer to printout what raises would look like if between 2.5-3.5%.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Cavanagh, Chair

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HR Committee Meeting – FO Notes
October 12, 1:00 p.m.

Chief Rizzo – School Safety Officer (SSO) proposal provided to Committee – MOU and Job Description. SRO position visits all campuses and involves interaction with students (counseling) with HS and MS. SSO is for the safety and security of the building, staff, and students. Patrol perimeter and make safety recommendations. The benefit is that Village will have the officer during the summers as a supplement to PD staff.

There was a discussion about the proposed job description stating it was a “contractual” position and what happens at the end of three years if the school district discontinues the program. The SSO position is required to take one SRO course within one year. Budzik stated it would be a 3-year commitment (not contract) and recommended not creating a new job description but rather that SSO is an assignment and specify what is required of the assignment. There was also discussion about vacation days being restricted by the school calendar.

FO pointed out there needs to be an understanding up front that if the program is discontinued, what happens with the additional officer. Berger said in three years, the extra position could be absorbed through attrition, or the part-time officers get less hours until the department returns to the normal staffing of 10 officers.

There will still be an MOU with the school. A specific officer would not be identified and potentially any officer could fill the position in the event the regular officer was not available. The Chief said this provides flexibility and allows the candidate to first be educated about how the department operates before becoming an SSO. The plan is after the School Board approves the MOU, the committee goes back to Council for the ability to hire another police officer, an 11th position, which is reimbursable up to 70%. The Chief will assign the officer from within and then hire a new officer. FO asked if they would want multiple officers to take the SRO training for flexibility and backup. The Chief said the training is free, and all officers have the same training; this could offer flexibility. The Chief said to make this effective January 1st. MOU has been given to the School District. Changes will be reviewed by the Solicitor.

Cavanagh said she discussed a topic with the Mayor and wanted to make HR aware. One SD employee had a knee replacement and will be out until January 15th. Another employee of the department has shoulder surgery upcoming and will not be able to plow. She said the SD guys want the recently resigned PD employee, who has a CDL, to drive. They know him, they like him and can work with him. She is bringing it up solely because she wants her conscience clear on this but doubts it would pass in Council. She said there is no one to cover except if they borrow from other townships and villages. FO explained it is a different retirement system, not OP&F.

There was discussion about making a bump in uniform allowance starting in January from \$800 to \$1,200 per officer. This would include a new cover vest for comfort issues, but not a SWAT type vest. Uniform allowance is based on time worked for part-timers. He increased the maximum for part-time to \$100.

Budzik provided and reviewed the revisions from the last meeting. Overtime – added Personal Days to what is counted. (P. 13). Sick and funeral leave will not count as time worked. Vacation, jury duty, paid holidays, or personal days will be included as time worked. A floating holiday is a personal day or holiday and is included towards time worked.

2nd Comp time issues addressed -re: selling and buying comp time. Budzik said he took the last sentence out and said, “employees may request to be paid out in cash accrued comp time one time per month”. The Village has the option to pay out accrued comp time once a year. Some entities choose to do this because it will be worth more the following year. FO explained that comp time is capped – no more than 80 hours. Budzik

included this. Over 80 is automatically paid as overtime. Budzik kept the language that in the accounting of the accumulated comp time, each department should provide it to the FO every payroll. That would give the FO the ability to do this one time a month. Budzik explained the previous discussion about the ambiguity of some of the phrasing about paying the comp time out as time and a half.

Discussion about three holidays (Christmas, New Years, Thanksgiving) being double time for Police too. FO clarified that Service gets double time on actual holidays. Budzik clarified they get double-time on any holiday. Cavanagh – designated those three as the actual day and not the observed holiday.

P. 14 – Disciplinary policy. Budzik -took out three categories and said, ‘here are your standards of conduct. If you violate any of these things, you could be disciplined based on the discretion of the employer.’”

If an employee gets in trouble off duty for misconduct or any violation, the Village can consider it and can constitute disciplinary action. Cavanagh has had push-back on this. If one of the cops got a DUI not on duty, would this be left to the Chief’s discretion to take disciplinary action? Is it up to the Department Head? FO said off-duty personnel have been disciplined in the past with suspension and mandatory treatment - there is a process. There was discussion that OVI can affect SD CDL and PD patrolling. Discussion about bar fights, domestic violence, swastikas are unbecoming and make the Village look bad. Off duty conduct is evaluated by the Department Head. Budzik said you never have to mandate discipline; it is discretionary depending on circumstances right from the beginning. If someone is going to be suspended, they have to be given a pre-suspension hearing. The employee who is disciplined can still appeal through the grievance procedure.

Budzik said an employee would be provided notice of charges and then there would be a hearing in front of the Mayor. The Mayor could affirm it and then it is done ~ the suspension would be imposed. The employee could still file a grievance at this point. Budzik did not want to get caught in the box of arguments being made about something being a level one which is a reprimand, etc. He said Department Heads have been around long enough to know when something is a reprimand or when something should be a suspension or greater. FO stated everything should be documented for the file. Budzik agreed and said it should always be done – it will help when they fire someone for employment purposes. He included that the Village would attempt to use progressive discipline but could terminate an employee at any time for any reason - employees are at will. Discussion about termination and that it cannot be illegal such as retaliation, discrimination, etc. Berger and Budzik stated you always want to document the reason, the steps taken, etc. to put in their file for support. Even verbal warnings should always be documented.

Changed compensation upon separation – “Village can waive the two- or four-week requirement” under Terminations. “These periods may be waived by employer.” (waive notice provision).

Vacation carry-over – carry over 40 hours (no supervisor approval). Any vacation over 40 hours remaining at the end of the year is use it or lose it.

Holidays – For employees, excluding PD, if an employee works a holiday, he/she will be paid at the applicable overtime rate or double time. If non-exempt employee, excluding PD, works actual holiday set forth in policy, such employee shall receive double time premium pay for all hours actually worked providing employee works four or more hours on the holiday. For PD, since they have floating holidays (80 hours) and 16 hours personal time. Non-exempt PD personnel shall receive 16 hours of pay or comp time if work on New Year’s Day, Christmas or Thanksgiving providing they work an entire 8- or 12-hour shift as scheduled by the employer.

Observed/Actual Holiday – Changed to actual holiday. “If a holiday falls on a weekend, the holiday may be observed on the closest Friday or Monday by the Village. However, any actual holiday worked by employees, excluding PD employees, on a Saturday or Sunday will be paid at the premium time rate.” The committee

specifically talked about Christmas and New Year. If something falls on a weekend, they will get double-time. If July 4th falls on a Sunday and they are called out, the Village will still observe it on Monday. The committee told Budzik that if the actual holiday was on a Saturday or Sunday, that was when they would get the double-time. The observed holiday is time and a half. Berger said this is what they asked for in the Street Department, so that is what the committee wrote down.

Uniform allowance – changed safety boot reimbursement. Will need to change uniform allowance numbers. Chief – increase part time amounts by \$100 for each increment for part-timers and \$1,200 for full-time officers. Clarification – between 100 and 199 hours is \$200, etc. and anything over 400 hours is \$500. Budzik – need to put a provision that these will be effective January 1, 2024. FO said this could be in the legislation. Chief – officer start up – can it be made discretionary because prices have been going up or \$1,500 for start-up uniforms for FT and \$500 for PT.

P. 8 (1)(b) – number should change from \$400 to \$500.

Budzik will make the additional changes and give them to the committee to review. Last clean-up in November. Village is currently at a \$3,180 health care plan, and the increase is 7.53% and if the Village changes to a \$3,500 plan, it would be 4.37%. It would save the Village \$275 per year per employee for single, for example, but would cost the employee \$320 more a year in deductibles. Berger did not think it was worth the change. The renewal is due December 1st, so a motion of council would be needed. Berger thought it should be renewed for the employees.

There was discussion about offering health insurance to elected officials, and it being a part of their compensation which cannot be changed during the term. Given the election filing deadline is passed, no changes can be made. Berger gave various scenarios of what elected officials could pay and what the Village could pay on their behalf. He said if it were \$1,500 per month per Council member, that is \$18,000 times six, which is a ton of money, and he did not think it is reasonable. Mayor said Chagrin Falls gives School Board members health care. Berger clarified that was not CF council. The mayor will look into it. Berger did not think it made sense to undertake a potentially \$100,000 expense to offer health care to the council members. Discussion ensued about being grandfathered and being based off the health of the group; including Council would change the demographic of the group. Cavanagh said it sounded like they were saying no. Berger – Mayor is welcome to ask the question, but it did not seem to make financial sense to the Village to undertake that.

Social Media Policy: Berger got an email directly from Maple Leaf reporter asking him for information about the contract with Thrasher Dinsmore. He did not respond and said he did not think it was appropriate for him as a council member to offer him that information and asked if he could check with council and then they would provide a response. It was explained that the only required response is to give the facts, not opinions. FO reminded them of the instruction from the Solicitor and gave the example of going out for levies, do not put “Mayor Bill Koons” but simply “Bill Koons.” As officials of the Village, they cannot ask for support for a levy.

FO reported that regarding OT exceptions recently made for the SD for overtime, there may also be adjustments to make for the Police Department. Rather than doing it every Council meeting until the handbook is adopted, they will do one adjustment (one motion) prior to the end of the year. The FO, Admin and Chief will review all PD timesheets back to May when SD exemptions started so that any exceptions made are across the board for all employees.

FO – COLA. Berger – he was thinking about 2.75%. Cavanagh was thinking 3%. FO will do a spreadsheet to show 2.5%, 2.75%, 3%, and 3.5%. Chief said the SSO proposal will need to be adjusted for this. Budzik stated

the MOU needs an escalator clause saying that the price will go up for any increases paid to police officers. Berger added "at in the sole discretion of South Russell Village."

Cavanagh referred to the discussion at the Council meeting about Dave Hocevar and the remaining balance on his contract. She wanted to be sure that the Village keeps him. Council discussed addressing it when he met the limit. Berger said Bell will report back monthly to report status. FO stated the budget will have to be amended. You cannot move it from payroll from the Zoning Inspector which is Salaries and Benefits to Other expenses. Additionally, Council will need to take action to amend the contract because the contract states up to \$48,250. Mayor said the cap should be taken out of contract; Cavanagh agreed. Berger replied that everything should have a reasonable cap on it. He would rather amend the budget than give an unlimited number and find out at the end of the year he spent \$250,000. FO explained the cap allows for discussion / management. Berger said it is important to always have a cap.