

**Human Resources Committee Meeting
December 9, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, committee member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo

Chairman Bell called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Sunshine Law, Ethics, and Process Concerns

Committee members expressed concern regarding ongoing deviations from Ohio Sunshine Law, Ethics Law, and internal Village processes. Members agreed that Council must remain diligent and strictly compliant with statutory requirements to preserve transparency and functional governance.

Administrative Office Staffing

The Fiscal Officer explained there will likely be staffing hour changes between the current administrative team in 2026. The part-time Administrative Assistant has been concentrating more time on cross-training on the fiscal office administrative tasks, including year-end processes which will be beneficial when scheduling changes occur. Both employees are performing well and are good departmental fits. The team is currently exploring AI to reduce the time required for minute preparation and assist in completing other administrative tasks. The hope is that using AI will reduce the time required to complete some administrative tasks which will allow more time for tasks that require a hands-on approach to complete. The Village does not have a work-from-home policy and the committee is not interested in pursuing one.

While the current part-time Administrative Assistant has provided backup coverage in the Building Department in the Building Department Administrative Assistant's absence, with upcoming changes in the fiscal office, her availability will be limited. Therefore, this may be a good time to prepare and develop a backup /potential succession plan for the Building Department. Having a plan and staff in place would allow the Village to be prepared in the event there was an unexpected leave of absence or staffing changes. Given Village officials have agreed they would like to have a full-service Building Department, they need to ensure they are properly prepared to provide those services if staffing changes occur.

Chain-of-Command

Committee reviewed how authority flows when department heads are absent. Currently departments already work cooperatively. When one department head is out, others cover operational needs. Employees know to contact the Fiscal Officer when department leadership is unavailable. For the Police Department, the general chain of command order is the Chief, Lieutenant, Sergeant(s). If no administrators are reachable, authority defaults to the Police Department leadership chain. Committee agreed this system functions well but needs formal written documentation. Council member Berger will draft a formal chain-of-command policy.

Drug Testing and Safety Officer Procedures

A recent accident involving a Service Department employee highlighted confusion about the drug-testing protocol. The Village's current drug-testing vendor is going out of business at the end of the year. The Fiscal Officer will research other vendors. The Drug Free Safety Policy should be reviewed and potentially updated next year.

Hiring Process Revisions

Committee reviewed problems in a recent hiring cycle where references were contacted too early. There are currently two hiring policies in place, one for the Police Department and one for the remainder of the employees. Given the police require a more thorough background search and the pension board requires a more thorough physical, etc. it was decided there will be revisions to the handbook where there will be one checklist with an additional section of the advanced requirements of the Police Department.

Reference requests should be on a separate page of the application, and reference checks are to be conducted only after the preliminary department interview and before a joint committee/mayor interview. The checks are to be done by the Department Head or HR (Fiscal Officer), not elected officials. All interviews must take place on Village property. The Police Department will continue to conduct surface-level and advanced background investigations.

Physical and Psychological Evaluations

Committee agreed to reinstating uniform pre-employment testing for all departments to include physical and psychological testing. Police Department candidates will have advanced physical exams as required by OP&F. The FO and the Police Chief will research available providers and draft a unified policy covering physical and psychological testing and bring it back to HR.

Probationary Period Policy

Committee discussed extending the probationary period from 6 months to 12 months. The committee agreed on the following approach:

- Employees continue to receive the 5% pay increase after 6 months upon satisfactory review.
- Performance probation continues through one full year.
- Applies to employees hired on or after Jan. 1, 2026.

A formal amendment to the Employee Handbook will be drafted.

Other Business

- Chief Rizzo intends to recommend a Lieutenant promotion in January.
- An incident involving a dog bite was briefly discussed for workers' compensation context.
- FO to send out a request to Council for them to contact her with the committees they wish to serve on in 2026 in order of their priority choice.
- The committee would like to schedule a training session for early 2026 to review:
 - Sunshine Law & Ethics training and why the training is important for elected officials to take.
 - Budget and government accounting workshop.
- Council should schedule a strategic planning review (including facility & capital forecasting) in 2026.