

Personnel Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
June 10, 2014

There was a meeting of the Personnel Committee in Council Chambers on Monday June 9, 2014 following the Street Committee with these members in attendance:

Carol Floyd, Chair	Marc Guthrie
Ryan Bubb	Alex Rolletta
Doug Marmie	

We wish to Report:

1. **Ordinance No. 14-16** an ordinance amending the position classification, pay range, and position authorization tables of the Department of Public Service, Division of Street Maintenance by creating one (1) additional Crew Leader and abolishing one (1) position of Equipment Operator was considered.

Director Rhodes- what our thoughts here is, the cost to the City is about .50 cents an hour. We have another Crew Leader position which we currently have one but the crews that are out during the day will have a crew leader, somebody who is responsible, somebody looking around to see if there are additional things that need to be done. We think that we will be a little bit more efficient. We plan to promote from within.

Motion to send to full Council by Mr. Bubb, second by Mr. Marmie

Mr. Rolletta- so Director Rhodes we are eliminating another worker position and creating another supervisor. Do you think that it is necessary to keep the other supervisor position that has been vacant since January? Could you tell me some of the difference between that old supervisor position and the new one you aim to create?

Director Rhodes- no, I am not eliminating a worker position so you are confused there. What we are doing is taking somebody who is out on the crew and we are putting them in a position to look around and make decisions so they don't have to drive back or wait for Buster to drive over. We are empowering our employees there a bit, that is number one and number two it is a total different level than management. We are not asking this person to make large scope decisions. We are asking them to make decisions if they are on a pot hole filling crew to not just fill the pot holes where they have the complaint. We are asking them to look around a little bit and see if there is a pot holes down a side street or hey guys we can do this a little quicker and we can get down to our next step a little quicker.

Mr. Guthrie- I think one thing and you correct me if I am wrong on this but I think that folks really need to understand this. The legislation eliminates an equipment operator position but folks need to understand even though the legislation eliminates one it

really is cosmetic because we have 4 Equipment Operators are vacant so that just means that we are going to have 3 Equipment Operators that are going to be vacant. Correct me if I am wrong David, right?

Director Rhodes- I don't think we have that many that are open. We are getting ready to fill one. We have 6 good applicants for one Equipment Operator position.

Mr. Guthrie- I am going on what Mr. Buskirk gave us that indicates that we have 4 Equipment Operators that are vacant currently and maybe you are going to fill one of those I don't know but we are still even eliminating this position we are still going to have vacancies for Equipment Operators.

Director Rhodes- we are funded for one more additional Equipment Operator those other two Operator positions aren't currently funded in this budget.

Mr. Guthrie- I understand that but I think that everybody needs to know that even though the legislation eliminates an Equipment Operator position that it does not, it is not if there are Equipment Operator positions there that we are going to fill. We are not going to fill the three vacancies that will exist after this one is eliminated. We may fill one is what I am hearing you say.

Director Rhodes- only one of those vacancies are funded so you are correct so we won't be filling positions that were not funded in this years' budget.

Mr. Guthrie- David as you know you and I have a difference on Mr. Prince's old position in that I was under the understanding that once Mr. Prince's probation period was over that you folks were going to be open to eliminating that position. After we finish dialogue with Mr. Rhodes I am going to offer an amendment on that. You know I doubt the votes are there to accept it but based on what I thought was an understanding we had I am going to proceed to do that.

Motion by Mr. Guthrie to eliminate Mr. Prince's old position Street Maintenance Operations Manager, second Mr. Rolletta

Mr. Guthrie- we are eliminating an Equipment Operators position I feel that with the City's financial condition being what it is I think that we send a positive message to folks when we clear up some of these positions that are sitting there and could be filled if the money were appropriated. In a case like this even though I want to make this clear the Union has never agreed with my position that we should merge Streets and Traffic but this administration has moved that direction and I think that is a positive thing and I firmly believe that based on the step the administration took to put Mr. Prince into the one position and by adding this position that Council is asked to add tonight you are going to have Crew Leaders or whatever the position is called on both sides Street and Traffic, I should say a supervisory level person even though it is a Union position who can assist with managing people in both Streets and Traffic and I think it is a good time to get this position off of the table organization.

Mr. Marmie- I think if Mr. Guthrie wants to do something like this we don't normally abolish funded positions that the administration has not brought forward unless you want to bring forward additional legislation. I would want to vote on these two issues separately because I feel it is two separate issues and the administration has indicated that they are looking into that possibility and it might be something in the future but they are not ready to make that determination. They are working through some of the

structural changes that are going on and evaluating according to performance and other issues within the organization. Then they are going to weigh their decision on that. In talking to Director Rhodes he indicated that they are not saying that it's not going to happen it's just that they are just not ready to make that plunge at this very time. I don't feel like you can add something like under the legislation such as this. It would be like somebody saying they need additional funding from Finance Committee and we will just offer an amendment and add something completely separate to the agenda. I don't think that is the way that we should operate. If there is a separate piece of legislation that needs to be voted on it should go through the proper channel and should be in the Council Clerk's office at the particular time then heard by this committee and voted on according to that.

Mr. Guthrie- Doug you made a reference to the funding issue. The fact of the matter is the position that we are dealing with tonight wasn't funded. This is a new position we didn't have funding for this position, this specific position. It is a new position. The funding may be available but we didn't have this position in the budget when we approved it for this calendar year. As far as dealing with it as an amendment what are we here for? I mean are we not able to offer amendments? I think that the rules make it pretty clear that these kinds of things can be done in the amendment process.

Mr. Bubb- just a few items, number one I think this year has been a good example of what you have done David with working within your means. We had a terrible winter and you were able to do a pretty good job with the budget, you have done a great job with it so I think if this is what you are bringing forth you are the administration, you are the Service Director if this is what you bring forth than I think that we have to respect that and not try to be the administration up here. If there is anything that you add to that it is my opinion to support the Ordinance in front of us. I am not in support of this amendment at this time.

Mr. Guthrie- I sit here and I think I have been on and off Council now for 10 years and I think about the comment Mr. Bubb just made and I think about how this Council handled requests for Personnel of the previous administration. I mean for crying out loud. I have been very complimentary of this administration, very complimentary and for us to say we are up here trying to manage City Government; this Council is charged with creating, eliminating positions and appropriating the funds. So this is fully within our area and as I told Mr. Rhodes I don't have a problem adding this position. I don't have a problem eliminating the Equipment Operator. I even told David if he wanted to keep the Equipment Operator in there that is fine. All I am trying to achieve is to eliminate one management level position. We have 6 less employees in Streets and Traffic than we had about 5 years ago. At some stage you think maybe we are getting too many Chiefs and not enough Indians and we have to have people delivering services.

Mr. Bubb- I don't think that anybody would disagree with that Mark about delivering services. I think that the Director has made it pretty clear that this is something that they might think about what you spoke about but they want some more time to do some fine tuning. I would respect that opinion brought forth.

Mr. Marmie- again I think that it goes back to the fact that it is two separate issues and we talk about transparency and bringing things forward. I can understand offering amendments and talking about things and we have done that up here with Directors when they have spoken. We have taken the kind of attitude or concept like this makes sense can you live with this? The administration is clearly against this then all of the sudden it goes to where you vote against the entire issue and only half of it... I go back to it is two separate issues. If this is an issue that needs to be presented to full Council as Councilman Guthrie has indicated yes it is charge of this Council to do that but I feel that it should be a separate piece of legislation and should go through the proper channels and should be drafted and brought forth through the proper channels instead of just tacking something on like we criticize our Federal Government of doing. They just tack something on just to get it through or have it voted against.

Director Rhodes- I think that this Council and the administration has had a pretty good relationship. I would call it a trusting relationship. I would call it a relationship that has good dialogue. As I said to you this morning when you and I spoke, you are a majority leader and Chair of Personnel, at this second I don't have intent to go out and hire somebody for that old position. My intent is to see how this Equipment Operator position works out and then to sit down with you later in the future probably about 8-10 weeks and we will determine the direction of the position Councilman Guthrie is speaking of and at that time if we are going to make changes to it we will bring it back to the Committee if we need. For fairness and for the record I am not supportive of the \$62,000.00 a year salary and that is in part why I have left that position open. It is a different level position than say a Crew Leader and there could be other changes out there that we have all talked about that some of them we want to address and some of them we don't.

Mr. Rath- I am all in favor of eliminating the Chief when we have too many Chiefs and not enough Indians but if we do this what are the odds of the Union filing a grievance because we have eliminated this Chiefs position due diligence and research?

Mr. Guthrie- the position that I recommend eliminating is not a Union position and they would have no purpose for grieving.

Motion failed to amend Ordinance 14-16 by a vote of 2 (Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Rolletta) to 3 (Mrs. Floyd, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Bubb)

Mr. Guthrie- I am going to go ahead and support the main motion but I am of course disappointed that I didn't get my amendment in.

Motion to send Ordinance 14-16 to full Council was carried by a 5-0 vote.

Carol Floyd, Chair