

**COMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL/INSURANCE  
(PC 6-97)**

**June 24, 1997**

**7:30 PM**

Chairman Reiniger called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

**Present::** Aldermen Reiniger, Domaingue, Cashin, Robert

**Absent:** Alderman Hirschmann

**Messrs.:** M. Hobson, H. Moran, R. Rusczek, F. Thomas, P. Beauchemin

CITY CLERK - Ratify and confirm a telephone poll conducted to extend the work week for Patricia Piecuch from 35 hours to 40 hours.

On motion of Alderman Cashin, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to ratify and confirm the poll approve the request.

HEALTH - Reclassification of Account Clerk to Senior Account Clerk.  
It is recommended that this request be held pending the approval of the compensation and pay study.

Mr. Rusczek briefly explained that the request was to reclassify the position providing a two grade increase, to a grade 15. He noted that the person in the position was currently performing duties beyond the scope of her position, and that a recent management audit reflected that he should not be doing the financial reporting requirements for grants, it should be done by lower level personnel. His options were to receive approval for an upgrade to senior account clerk and be able to transfer these responsibilities to this person, or to review grant funds and hire an outside part time business service officer position to perform these tasks. He noted that this would be a more costly way of doing business. Another option which could be pursued was plus rate.

Alderman Domaingue moved to approve reclassification of the position.

Discussion ensued where Alderman Robert noted concerns with making exceptions for departmental reclassifications, feeling if they did it for one they had to do it for all. Alderman Cashin noted that they would be saving money. Alderman Domaingue commented that this request was additionally based on a management audit, and was a more economical solution.

Following lengthy discussion, it was concluded that a plus rate would be an acceptable solution.

On motion of Alderman Cashin, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to approve a plus rate for performance of tasks outside the scope of the position.

(NOTE: Following action on the following item -- this action was rescinded and a reclassification was approved. See discussion of item 5.)

**HIGHWAY - Reorganization at the Highway Department.**

If approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen: one Highway Field Supervisor position shall be eliminated from the department complement; the Utility Foreman II (Curb Supervisor, Sweeping Supervisor and the Sidewalk Supervisor) shall be reclassified to Utility Foreman III position (Grade 20); the Equipment Operator IV in the department complement shall increase by one position and Utility Foreman I position shall be upgraded to Utility Foreman II.

Mr. Thomas addressed the committee explaining that the idea was to reorganize the positions, shifting the supervisory duties formerly performed by the Highway Field Supervisor onto the other three supervisors and upgrade those three positions. The Field Supervisor position would be eliminated and they would be able to add a Equipment Operator IV to their complement to allow for a backhoe operator. In essence they would add a laborer and eliminate a supervisor.

A lengthy discussion ensued where Alderman Domaingue noted that this was no different than the previous request, it was a reclassification of positions. Alderman Robert felt it was different in that it was the result of a reorganization. Alderman Cashin noted it was no different and if they approved this item then they should go back and approve the previous request by the Health Officer for a reclassification. Within discussion Alderman Domaingue suggested that a policy should be made regarding these requests. It was noted that there were 75

reclassification requests that had previously been held up pending determination on a reclassification study. The committee agreed it wished to at least look at a policy, although each was a separate case on its own merit. Members concurred that it made sense to approve the reclassification in both the instance of Highway and Health, it was a savings of money. Alderman Cashin noted it also was a reflection of support for long term good employees of the city, particularly in the instance of Health.

On motion of Alderman Robert, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to approve the Highway Reorganization with reclassifications and the Health Department request for reclassification and further to request the Personnel Director to review the issue of a policy and bring something before the committee for its deliberation.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Cashin, it was voted to rescind previous action with regard to plus rate payment for the Health Department account clerk.

#### POLICE - Request to rehire/reinstate Police Officer Thomas Gallagher.

Alderman Domaingue moved for discussion. Alderman Cashin seconded the motion.

Mr. Beauchemin addressed the committee advising that Officer Gallagher had left the department and accepted a position in Salem. Chief Driscoll had run into him and he had indicated an interest in returning, prior to a year of absence from the City. Mr. Beauchemin explained that this was a good officer who would require no training to be placed on the street, and they were requesting to reinstate Officer Gallagher with the department and restore his sick leave benefits.

Discussion ensued as to current policy where it was noted that if an employee leaves the city and returns within a year the ordinance provides that the sick leave will be restored. In this case the actual return of the employee would be more than a year. Mr. Beauchemin explained that the officer could have been sworn in by the Chief and therefore would have been back within a year but because the Chief chose to go through the normal process the paperwork lag created an instance where the year had expired before actually returning this person to work.

Following brief discussion where it was noted that they had a written request on file prior to the year expiration, on motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Cashin, it was voted to approve the request.

#### PERSONNEL - Human Resources Department Reorganization Proposal.

Alderman Robert moved for discussion. Alderman Domaingue seconded the motion.

A handout was distributed to members of an ordinance drafted by the solicitor's office regarding the proposed reorganization.

Alderman Domaingue asked how many positions they would be adding with this reorganization.

Mr. Hobson stated that in the Personnel Department budget proposed for next year, FY98 was an additional position. That position is transferred to the finance department, so there was one new position. In response to further question, Mr. Hobson advised his understanding was that that position was transferred in the proposed budget by Alderman Wihby which was approved the previous evening.

Alderman Domaingue asked if that was the benefits administrator. Mr. Hobson responded no, it was the auditor position, it appeared in the package, on chart C as Senior Auditor, Grade 25. Mr. Hobson stated that with the merging of three positions from Finance into HR (Human Resources) and one position from Risk into HR, the new position for next year for HR was transferred to Finance -- the FTE (full time equivalency) along with the cost. There was no change in the salary or the grade.

Alderman Cashin stated one, you are putting the payroll in the personnel department, was that right. Mr. Hobson responded yes. Alderman Cashin stated he was opposed to that. Alderman Cashin stated two, where does Terry Desrochers fit into this, commenting that she's been benefits manager now for 13 years. Mr. Hobson stated yes, her exact title is risk assistant currently, and she appears in the reorganization as benefits administrator, same grade, same salary. Alderman Cashin asked why she wouldn't fit into the benefits manager, noting she had been doing it for 17 years. Alderman Cashin stated he was concerned one about Connie Roy not being, (this was old news) offered the position, and now I see Terry Desrochers who had been doing the job as far as he knew for 17 years or whatever, and she was going to be reporting to someone, -- how long has this benefits manager been here.

Mr. Hobson responded what Terry Desrocher has been doing as a risk assistant is everything from filing and typing letters to dealing with typing liability policies, and also dealing with personnel benefits, specifically dealing with tying in the invoices, and Matthew Thornton, Delta Dental and Blue Cross or Blue Choice to the employee to the employee code, and then oftentimes that information has to be tied into the cards on the employee's files over in City Personnel. She has never been involved to the best of my knowledge with salary information. She's generally been Harry's assistant in terms of running his function. With moving the benefits function onto a computer system, and tying that in with a salary structure, automating it, she'll actually be able to move her functions into a much easier, more manageable way of doing business, and Harry can afford to loose that person as his general assistant, and the city solicitor's office at no extra cost to the city will assume Harry's support functions.

Alderman Cashin asked who was taking the compensation and benefits manger, who was it. Mr. Hobson responded that is a person who's been with us. Mr. Clougherty stated Janelle Larock.[sas]. Alderman Cashin asked how long she had been with the city. Mr. Hobson responded six to eight months. Alderman Cashin asked if she knew more about benefits administration then the person who had been in the job for seventeen years. Mr. Clougherty stated absolutely, no question, because what is happening here is the people who has been doing benefits administration is doing primarily clerical, secretarial functions, and what we need is a person who has background in personnel management, that knows systems operations, is familiar with federal laws and those aspects, so there is a big, big difference in the background and qualifications, there is a big difference in what one has been doing versus the other. Alderman Cashin stated that for over 17 years he had dealt with Terry on some very complicated matters involving insurance and other matters and she has been extremely professional and extremely knowledgeable, and I really feel what is happening is wrong. Alderman Cashin stated that he felt it was sending a very strong message to a lot of long term employees in the city.

Mr. Hobson added that when they were talking about this reorganization he did ask for Harry's opinion about how he felt about this and asked if he could meet with Terry himself, and explain this to her and did. Mr. Hobson stated she seemed very pleased by the change, seemed grateful to be able to work within a department where she will have some clerical support to get her job done; that she has been very excited and motivated by the new information systems program that she has never been able to work with before. By her own admittance, so much of what she has to do has been done by hand, so as a person, as a human being, he thought they had tried to be sensitive to her needs and she seems very excited

about the change. Mr. Hobson stated that the person who was going into the management position, and make no mistake Terry will have administrative functions and duties, the other important part of being a compensation and benefits manager in this particular environment is being familiar with HRIS systems, something that Connie Roy was very good - and she was the person trained to do that. Mr. Hobson stated with her departure Janelle fits into a very key role because she is familiar with the HRIS system, or function, within HTE.

Alderman Cashin asked where in the model did he find another corporation of the \$160 million with a payroll department in the personnel department. Mr. Hobson stated he did some research on that. Alderman Cashin stated not benefits, payroll. Mr. Hobson stated he did some research and your right, it could be a coin toss, but I don't think that your assessment is 100 percent accurate that it isn't being done. Alderman Cashin asked if Mr. Hobson if he had found any stating he (Alderman Cashin) had not found any. Mr. Hobson responded yes, in fact in a book called Reinventing Government which specifically deals with this, there were a number of cases where I did find that that took place. He also had contacted a number of national associations. Mr. Hobson stated that the company which Alderman Cashin works for before the merger, the Elliot Hospital, was doing exactly that. Human Resources was responsible for salary and benefits and finance was responsible for audit. Mr. Hobson stated that he had faced the fact that government and business do operate a little bit differently. You clearly have a municipality software system. The software was driving a great deal of this. That is how it functions, the salary and benefits system are together, they re one, you can't separate them, it will not work.

Alderman Cashin stated that he was a little bit concerned with the way Mr. Hobson had recommended to do it, noting that was his opinion and as far as Optima Health the salaries are not in the human resources department. Mr. Hobson concurred that he was right.

Alderman Robert commented that he thought they were here to look at the structure, he knew it was normal to be concerned with the individuals and where they fit in, but he hoped that they would leave the decision making up to them. If the structure was adopted, leave the decision making as to who would go where to the folks that would run it.

Alderman Cashin stated he was not to have compassion for anyone that has worked here for 17 years.

Alderman Robert stated that he had acknowledged the fact that it was normal to be concerned about the people and how they fit into the process, but we hired these

people to run the department, their decision as to where people should go the alderman shouldn't get involved in.

Alderman Cashin responded he shouldn't be concerned about the people who have worked here for over 13 years, that they are not getting hurt.

Alderman Robert stated he was saying that it was normal to do that, but to have a department run and run well and effectively, the decision should be theirs.

Alderman Cashin stated was he telling him that people who he had been associated with all these years, that have been doing as far as he knew an exemplary job in what they have been doing, if he felt they were being treated unfairly that he should not bring that up.

Alderman Robert stated he could bring it up but he did not think it should be something that they should be focused on.

Alderman Cashin stated that the day he sat on the Board of Aldermen or sit in the Personnel Committee, and I am not concerned with the human beings that are working for the city of Manchester, he would resign from the committee.

Alderman Robert stated that was fine both had stated what they thought.

Alderman Cashin noted that people made this city.

Alderman Robert stated he understood that but people were looking for efficiency and this would throw it off.

Alderman Cashin stated that Connie Roy was passed over and he was not suppose to be concerned about that, and Terry Desrocher who has been with the city for at least 17 years, probably longer, is being passed over and he shouldn't be concerned with that.

Alderman Robert stated no he was not, but that the decision should not be ours, it should be theirs.

Alderman Cashin stated we set the policy. This was a policy.

Alderman Robert stated are we going to staff this.

Alderman Cashin stated that he was going to do everything he could to see that the people are at least being treated fairly, and he did not think they were.

Alderman Robert asked Mr. Hobson and Mr. Clougherty if they had already figured out the personalities who are going to fit the boxes. Mr. Hobson responded yes.

Mr. Clougherty stated that there were really two models, there was a corporate model and there is a government model, and they were following the government model; that they felt that was the appropriate way to go. Mr. Clougherty stated in terms of assigning people, they tried to assign the most qualified people to different positions so we can move the City forward. Terry has done an admirable job, she's laterally moving over, she's been consulted with this, I understand, but I think you want to put the most qualified people into the position of management and that's what we'll recommend.

Alderman Domaingue stated I have two questions. The first one is when would this...getting the full approval of the Board...be implemented.

Mr. Clougherty replied from my standpoint it would be implemented at the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1st. The money is there and we could start moving over.

Alderman Domaingue stated as they do in private industry, is it not also possible that people who are currently performing duties in any department might have, I would hope, have an opportunity to cross train them in other jobs, so that they can learn additional skills and thereby qualify to increase their compensation based on the increased skill, is that going to be an opportunity, I would hope, in this new reorganization of this department that we would offer to our employees an opportunity to learn additional skills.

Mr. Clougherty stated we've talked about this several times at the Board level in terms of what we thought needed to be done to address the serious concerns that we have in this area and you need to upgrade the computers in order to do that, you need to make some structural changes, and you also need to go ahead and do the reclassification. If you were to take the current structure and come in and reclassify the positions and take a look at what they are doing and take a look at...aside from the titles and what they are actually doing as compared to what they are going to be doing with the new system, so now what you have to do is take people that have been doing clerical work for years and try to give them some new assignments and some opportunities for growth and the person you want to talk with is somebody that has been through that, understands that so that the opportunities would be there in the future and I think trying to make that all work in concert is the goal here and we have been sensitive to that. We have tried to

look at what is the best team that we could put in place and the best structure that we can put in place so that we can move the City forward and try and address some of the long-standing problems.

Mr. Hobson stated to add to that, I think we have already started that. Terry, the person who is going into the benefits administration position, a lot of the clerical functions that she was forced to do in her previous position she is not doing any more. She is going to be moving into an administrative role, learning on a new computer system; that position that as a Risk Assistant was a 40 hour-per-week position and in respect to the person that is being named into this 40 hour-per-week position so she can in fact cross train and can in fact learn more about the computer system doing the same thing with the HR Assistant position; that person stepped in and is being cross trained on the new software. Frankly, it's very exciting to go to these training classes to see these people who are coming alive working with this new software and PC-based system, they're enjoying it, they really like it and you can talk to any one of them and they'll tell you the same thing, they're happy.

Alderman Robert moved to approve the proposed Human Resources Department reorganization. Alderman Domaingue duly seconded the motion. The motion carried with Alderman Cashin duly recorded in opposition.

Communication from Lloyd Basinow requesting the Board adopt a restrictive ordinance prohibiting the future employment of individuals who are direct relatives of any elected or appointed City official.

Alderman Robert moved for discussion. Alderman Domaingue duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Robert stated I see we've got a problem, not so much the City Clerk's Office or people or Aldermen or whatever. I'd like to look at something city-wide. Some people have the perception that City employment is kind of a big club. With some people, if you know somebody and if you have family already in there, they will pull you in. I don't know if I like that statement, I don't know if that's even a reality. But, I'd like to look at something city-wide. I know, I work for Frito Lay and they will not hire anybody who is a relative of anybody else in the company.

Alderman Domaingue stated I think the suggestion has been made over the years, it has merit and this is probably the best time to take a serious look at it. I would have no problem with a city-wide policy, but I also want to say because I think it

is necessary to say it for once and for all that there are people in every family who are qualified to take on positions in any business and that includes government and for the public as much as I respect that we need a policy to assume naturally that a person who is hired by the City who may be directly or indirectly related to someone either a department head or an Aldermen or a what have you that that person isn't qualified to make that assumption is just as unfair as it is to hire someone who is unqualified because they're a relative and I hope that if this Committee is going to look at a policy it recognizes that we have some darn fine educated employees in the City of Manchester who through no fault of their own happen to be directly or indirectly related. But, it troubles me when I hear repeated outside in the public sector that because someone was hired they were no qualifications, there is no intelligence, there is no sincere desire to see the City move forward. There is only a desire for benefits and money and I have to quote that assertion, so I fully support at this time that this suggestion is taken up, but I'm going to stand very strong and say that it's time that everyone in this City understands that when we hire someone and now with the new reorganized Personnel/Human Resources Department, we're going to scrutinize even better. When we hire somebody, hopefully, it's on the basis of qualifications and not on who you are related to, but if this policy will help us separate for the perception of the people who pay the taxes, I'd be happy to support it.

Chairman Reiniger stated although I think this is a serious concern of the public, I can say from personal experience there was a business opening Downtown in my area and when they were working for the City they had a lot of compliments for the Water Department, the Highway Department and they'd specifically mentioned an individual and I said who is this person and they said his name was Chris Cashin, I said do you know who that is and they had no idea. There is only a few times that I have ever had an employee singled out and they didn't know who it was and I think he's since left the City and was valedictorian of his class, so I'd hate to have a policy that would prohibit hiring someone like that. So, maybe a compromise could be to at least have a full disclosure policy or something.

Alderman Robert stated look at the big picture - Hugh Moran, Mark Hobson - give us some points of view. Nepotism clauses or personnel ordinances throughout the country are not uncommon. Let's look at it and judge it on its merits.

Alderman Domaingue stated the action tonight would be not to enact one, but to send it to look at what the options are city-wide.

Alderman Cashin stated first of all, I would like to thank you for all you just said and I had no knowledge of that, but it does make me feel good and I am very proud of my son, he was an asset to the City and he left, quite frankly, because he

had a better opportunity. But, if I'm not mistaken this is also being directed in the new Charter, isn't it. If you want to look at it, that's fine, but let's go back to the new Charter, let's read it, let's see what it says because if I'm not mistaken it's pretty explicit and I really don't think you need this thing and moved that the communication be received and filed.

Alderman Robert stated I'd like to keep the options open, personally.

Alderman Domaingue stated if that's the case and the Charter covers the concerns that have been brought forward by Alderman Robert and myself and anyone else, if that cover it then at least let us examine that and say okay, we looked at this, it seems to be a good blanket coverage. But, to dismiss it without even looking at the wording, that's not fair. So, I would be in favor of at least sending it Human Resources and let them come back at the next meeting and let them make a report of what it is that the Charter contains and whether there is any opportunity for any further abuse.

Alderman Robert moved to forward the communication from Mr. Basinow to the Human Resources Department for further review with a report back to the Committee. Alderman Domaingue duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Reiniger noted Mr. Basinow was present and asked if he wished to address the Committee.

Mr. Basinow stated I don't have the City Charter in front of me, but I would point out because I have read that section and it refers to bringing pressure in some form or shape that would influence the hiring. Now, you've got a pressure that is there, but it doesn't mean that the person is going to come up and say this is my relative, this is my friend or whatever and cause the hiring of that person. So, in looking at the way the wording is there is built-in pressure and it exists even in private industry. If there's no policy then there is an in for saying hey, this is the person I'd like you to look at. The pressure is there whether you recognize it or not and while there might be a few people that would be qualified for a good City position and might not because of their position with other elected or appointed officials not get it; that doesn't mean that the City is being deprived of its best, qualified persons. If they look at the people who would be applying for the job and this would also assure that the job is properly posted.

Clerk Johnson stated I would like to state for the record that we have hired in our office on several occasions relatives of various officials or other people in the City and without a doubt it has been in the paper. We have always gone through the personnel process, I have an employee now, related to former Aldermen, who is

one of my best employees - as a niece of a former Alderman at the time, we had the Airport Director's wife working for us and she was one of our best assets. People use to comment on how good she was, she left and she is now working in the Mayor's Office. I've heard a lot of positive comments on how things are there. I have personally been the person who has interviewed from a selection of over a hundred candidates in some cases and we have always chosen the person who we felt was best suited for the position. I have never been pressured by any Aldermen or any City official to put anybody in and I would never make a decision based on that kind of pressure and I don't know of any other department head or assistant department head or anybody in my position or similar position that would do that. I felt that it was necessary to state that on behalf of the department.

Chairman Reiniger called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Request of Airport Director to extend probation period of Ms. Joan Pitman for a three-week period through July 31, 1997.

On motion of Alderman Cashin, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to approve the request.

### **TABLED ITEMS**

HIGHWAY - Reclassification of Highway Superintendent Position.  
(Tabled: February 13, 1996 PC-1)  
NOTE: Available for viewing in the Personnel Department.

This item remained on the table.

PERSONNEL - Information Support Specialist Positions.  
(Tabled: September 23, 1996 PC-6)  
NOTE:

This item remained on the table.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - Department Head merit System Responses.  
(Tabled: September 23, 1996 PC-6)  
Note: Available for viewing in the Personnel Department.

This item remained on the table.

Alderman Cashin moved to remove the following item from the table for discussion. Alderman Domaingue duly seconded the motion.

POLICE - Request to hire retired Police Officers on a temporary basis.  
(Tabled: January 27, 1997 PC 1-97)

The Committee was advised that the intent was to hire retired officers on a part time basis for inside work and to place regular officers outside, similar to dispatchers, etc. that they had done in the past.

On motion of Alderman Cashin, duly seconded by Alderman Domaingue, it was voted to approve the request.

POLICE - Request from Alderman Hirschmann to examine existing  
Personnel Policy for Police Officers.  
(Tabled: January 27, 1997 PC 1-97)

This item remained on the table.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Robert, duly seconded by Alderman Cashin, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee