

City of Harrington
MINUTES
City Council Workshop
December 2, 2013

A workshop with the Harrington City Council was held at Harrington City Hall, 106 Dorman Street, on December 2, 2013 and was attended by the following: Mayor Anthony R. Moyer; Vice Mayor Cheryl Lahman; Council Member Duane E. Bivans; Council Member Fonda Coleman; Council Member Charles W. Porter; Council Member Kenneth Stubbs; Norman Barlow, Chief of Police; William Pepper, City Solicitor; Teresa Tieman, City Manager; and Kelly Blanchies, Clerk of Council.

Also present: Marie Cunningham.

Council Member Amy Minner was absent.

Mayor Moyer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Purchase of jet vac

The City Manager stated that the jet vac is still not available for viewing, but information was received on the vehicle maintenance and parts replacement. The City Manager stated that the report reads that the truck is almost fourteen years old, and there are some rusty areas on the body; the overall condition of the truck is good and that it was used on a daily basis and is dependable.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked about the price of a new jet vac. The City Manager stated that a new one is about three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000), and the used one is forty-three thousand dollars (\$43,000).

Mayor Moyer asked if the City is harming itself by delaying more to see it. The City Manager stated that a decision does not need to be made immediately; the seller knows the City wants to look at it before purchasing it, and that is a reasonable expectation. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that she does not need to see it; people that know equipment should look at it.

Service awards

The City Manager stated that the City of Harrington Personnel Policy Manual allows for service awards but does not define the award. No awards have been presented for quite some time. The City Manager proposed a program with plaques and gift certificates as awards. The City Manager stated that the

proposed monetary portion of the program would be implemented with next year's budget and retroactive for the last five years. The estimated cost for retroactive monetary awards would be seven hundred dollars (\$700), and there would be one additional award for twenty-five dollars (\$25) next year.

Council Member Coleman asked if cash could be given instead of gift certificates. The City Manager stated that the Council can decide on either. The City Solicitor stated that cash would have to show on the employee's W2.

Council Member Porter asked why the personnel handbook is not on the agenda. Mayor Moyer stated that he had it removed. Council Member Porter stated that he thought the majority set the agenda. Mayor Moyer stated that the Mayor sets the agenda. Council Member Porter asked the City Solicitor how we go about doing that. The City Solicitor stated that they do not; the presiding officer controls the agenda. Council Member Porter stated that something has to be done to change the procedures.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked if the program is already in the handbook. The City Manager stated that the service awards are in the handbook but not what the program is. Vice Mayor Lahman asked if the awards should be included in the handbook or adopted as a policy. The City Manager stated that it is probably a good idea to add it to the handbook. Council Member Porter stated that it cannot be part of the handbook if the handbook cannot be discussed. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that it is on the agenda already.

The City Manager stated that there is an employee coming up on thirty-five years of service, and the personnel manual only goes to thirty years of service, so that could also be revised.

Vice Mayor Lahman stated that the awards are great because employees are valuable assets. The City Manager stated that it does let employees know that they are appreciated.

Library hours for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve

The City Manager stated that the Library's usual Tuesday hours are 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The City Manager stated that she is changing the hours on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve early closure with comp/vacation time

The City Manager stated that last year on Christmas Eve, there were only two customers, and it is not a good use of time. The staff is willing to flex time or take vacation time to go home at 1:00 p.m. Savings would come from not using electricity and gas on a day that is not very productive.

Mayor Moyer asked if that was how it usually is. The City Manager stated that there has not been anything official. The Chief of Police stated that previously the Mayor would just call and say it was alright to leave; last year it was at 2:00 p.m. The City Manager stated that there was no advanced notice to customers.

Council Member Coleman asked if the Mayor calls and says everyone can leave then no one has to use vacation time. The City Manager stated that was what it was before. Mayor Moyer stated that the employees can just leave early. The City Manager stated that if cost is a concern, the staff is willing to take vacation time or use flex time.

Council Member Bivans stated that remaining open until 2:00 p.m. would allow people on their lunch break to do business with the City. Council Member Coleman stated that posting advance notice of the hours allows people to adjust accordingly. Mayor Moyer stated that utility bills are not due then.

Council Member Bivans stated that flex time is not productive time. The City Manager stated that Christmas Eve is not a productive day anyway.

Mayor Moyer asked about Public Works coverage. The City Manager stated that there is always someone on call for Public Works.

Pay scale

The City Manager stated that the pay scale has twenty-five steps and twenty-five grades. There is a two percent increase between each step and five percent between grades. It starts at eight dollars and fifty cents (\$8.50) per hour.

The City Manager stated that all employees have been placed in a grade, and some would receive a raise to be in the scale. The goal was not to penalize anyone.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked if there are job descriptions for all positions. The City Manager stated that they have to be created for the new positions, Public Works Foreman, City Clerk II, and Public Work Technician levels.

Council Member Porter stated that the pay scale is just a guideline. If there is no money in the budget, then employees do not get raises.

The City Manager stated that the pay scale could be outdated in a few years and a cost of living adjustment given. The pay scale helps to budget, employees to know where they are headed, and starting salaries for new hires.

Council Member Porter asked if there is enough in the budget to cover the increased salary costs. The City Manager replied yes, starting in January.

The City Manager stated that any promotions should be at least a five percent increase.

Mayor Moyer asked if this would affect retirement costs. The City Manager stated that the employee and the City both contribute to the retirement plan.

The City Manager stated that the pay scale is based on what the City currently pays, instead of trying to match the salary levels of other employers.

The City Manager stated that there are proposed increases for the Police Department employees as well. Council Member Porter stated that Harrington pays police officers much less than other municipalities. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that the difference is the tax rate; the median income here is low. The Chief of Police stated that there is still work to do, but this is a great start.

Mayor Moyer asked if the police officers would get rid of the F.O.P. (Fraternal Order of Police) union since they bargain for raises. The Chief of Police stated that the F.O.P. has been gracious in going along with whatever raises the City gives to everyone. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that police salaries had to be increased before to receive grant funding, because they were too low.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked for the City Manager to provide the total cost, including benefits, of implementing the pay scale at the next Council Meeting. Council Member Porter asked for the amount available in the budget too. The City Manager stated that there is savings from vacancies and fund balance excess.

Council Member Porter asked if the budget controls the pay scale. The City Manager stated that employees would get a two percent raise every year, and the Council can always say that step increases will or will not be given each year. Every three to five years it should be looked at for cost of living adjustments.

Security cameras

The City Manager stated that due to recent regional events of violence involving municipalities, the Chief of Police believes that additional security measures should be taken at City Hall, including analog security cameras. The Chief of Police stated that cameras would be placed at the front door, lobby, parking lot, Council Chambers' door, and Council Chambers' audience. Digital is more expensive, but analog will be sufficient. The City Manager stated that funding is recommended from the Capital Improvement Fund.

Mayor Moyer asked if this system will tie into the lift station monitoring system. The City Manager replied no, and the County will be monitoring that system. The Chief of Police stated that the video can be downloaded and saved when there is an incident.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked about grant funding. The Chief of Police stated that the homeland security funding has dried up.

The Chief of Police stated that the City also has wells and a lot of equipment that should be protected. The Library and Parks and Recreation Department have many patrons and children at their facilities and should have cameras too.

Council Member Stubbs stated that a lot of crimes have been solved using video footage.

There being no further business, the City Council Workshop adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Blanchies
Clerk of Council