



TOWN OF KINGSTON
WAGE AND PERSONNEL BOARD
OPEN SESSION
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 101 & VIA ZOOM
JANUARY 18, 2024

6:00 PM – CALL TO ORDER

Chairman James Soule called the meeting of the Wage and Personnel Board to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 18, 2024. Present were members Lorraine Burgio and Darlene Regan. Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, was also present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

This meeting is being recorded by Zoom. Anyone intending to make an audio or video recording of this meeting should notify the Chair at this time.

Items may be taken out of order at the discretion of the Chair.

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE:

UPDATE FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

Tina Betti provided the following Human Resources update:

- The position of Finance Director – Town Accountant was still open.
- A number of applicants had applied for the Clerical Pool.
- The Substitute Circulation Assistant and Substitute Librarian positions were still open.
- Some KTEU positions were open as well.
- Employees would be educated on the health insurance changes for FY2024 before the Open Enrollment period.

Questions were asked and answered.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

APPROVE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

The Board reviewed the draft Annual Report prepared by the executive secretary. Motioned by Lorraine Burgio and seconded by Darlene Regan, the Board unanimously voted to approve the report of the Wage and Personnel Board for 2023 as written.

REQUESTED CLARIFICATION ON SECTION 15, MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS, (H)

An email dated December 11, 2023 had been received from Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, asking for clarification on Bylaw Section 15(h) regarding transferring employees and their date of hire. Holly Nighelli, now full-time Assistant Director of Elder Affairs, had previously been employed as the less than part-time Media and Marketing Coordinator for the Council on Aging. The position was grant-funded and not included under Wage and Personnel or a collective bargaining unit. Ms. Nighelli wanted her 2019 date of hire for the grant position to be used for calculating vacation leave.

Ms. Betti explained the issue to the Board and also why grant positions were not classified under Wage and Personnel or collective bargaining units. Wage and Personnel employees who worked less than 20 hours per week did not receive paid time off, unlike KTEU employees. Questions were asked and answered.

APPROVED FEBRUARY 12, 2024

Chairman Soule invited anyone in the audience to address the issue and Mary Beth Lawton, Director of Elder Services, spoke via Zoom. Ms. Lawton felt that Ms. Nighelli should have her date of hire for the grant position in 2019 recognized, that part-time Wage and Personnel employees should receive paid time off like KTEU employees, and that grant positions should be in Wage and Personnel.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding grant-funded positions, benefits for part-time positions and interpretation of Section 15(h).

At the end of the discussion, based on its interpretation of Section 15(h), the Board agreed with Ms. Betti that since Ms. Nighelli worked less than 20 hours per week in her previous position and was not eligible for benefits, her hire date in 2019 could not be recognized.

Bylaw Section 15(h) and the other issues raised will be discussed again at a later date.

DISCUSS REQUESTED RECLASSIFICATION FOR THE POSITION OF WASTEWATER SUPERINTENDENT, POSITION RATING AND COMPENSATION STUDY INFORMATION

An email dated November 21, 2023 had been received from Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, with materials from the Compensation Study for both the positions of Wastewater Superintendent and Water Superintendent. An additional email had been received from Ms. Betti dated December 20, 2023 regarding a meeting between herself, Keith Hickey, Town Administrator, and Elaine Fiore, Chair of the Sewer Commissioners, to discuss the requested reclassification.

Both Elaine Fiore and Keith Hickey were in attendance.

Ms. Betti provided an update on the request. The Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ) submitted for the position reclassification resulted in a score that placed the position in Grade 14, which was the same grade for the Fire and Police Chiefs. The Wastewater Superintendent was currently in Grade 12. Ms. Betti, Mr. Hickey and Ms. Fiore met, and Mr. Hickey could support a reclassification to Grade 13 based on the position's level of responsibility.

The grading and placement of the position by GovHR in the Compensation Study was discussed. The previous JAQ completed by the former Wastewater Superintendent and the submitted JAQ for the position reclassification were compared and the differences reviewed with Ms. Fiore. Mr. Hickey also provided input.

Ms. Fiore stated that the Sewer Commissioners discussed the grade at their last meeting and recognized that Grade 14 was for the Chiefs, but would like some flexibility with the Superintendent's step placement in Grade 13. Ms. Betti reviewed the process for determining the step for a reclassification/promotion and reminded the Board that the wording in Section 7(d) was under review for FY2025. With a 5% increase, the Superintendent's step in Grade 13 would be Step 3. Mr. Hickey asked if the step could be decided at the meeting. Ms. Fiore added that the Sewer Commissioners were recommending Grade 13, Step 7, based on the position's rating, the incumbent's years of service and the Assistant Superintendent making a comparable salary with overtime. Chairman Soule commented that he could not personally support Step 7. Ms. Betti commented that a 5% increase was typically provided for a reclassification. The step was further discussed. Motioned by Darlene Regan and seconded by Lorraine Burgio, the Board voted to recommend that the Wastewater Superintendent's position be reclassified from a Grade 12 to a Grade 13. Ms. Burgio abstained from the vote as she had not worked on the latest JAQ.

Mr. Hickey had to leave the meeting but said that he would return.

The Board took a 5-minute recess at 7:42 p.m.

The Board resumed its meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Mr. Hickey returned to the meeting.

APPROVED FEBRUARY 12, 2024

REVIEW NEW WORDING FOR SECTION 7, COMPENSATION, (D) PROMOTION

An email discussed previously had been received from Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, dated November 6, 2023 regarding changes to Bylaw Sections 7(d), 7(g), 11(f) and 15(a) for FY2025.

The Board reviewed the draft wording prepared by the executive secretary for Section 7(d), Promotion, and discussed it with Mr. Hickey and Ms. Betti. One possible change would be to delete the last sentence. The wording of Section 7(g), Entrance Rate for New Appointments, was also discussed as it needed to be changed to reflect current practice. Questions arose regarding the percentage increase for a promotion/reclassification and the starting step allowed for a new hire without Board approval. Mr. Hickey suggested looking at past hires to see the effects of possible language changes in Section 7.

Ms. Betti reminded the Board that there were two other sections in her email requiring language changes: Section 11, Sick Leave, (f) and Section 15, Miscellaneous Provisions, (a). All of the sections will be discussed at a future meeting.

REVIEW BYLAW AMENDMENT REQUESTS FOR FY2025

The Board reviewed all of the Bylaw amendment requests when it discussed the "Mail."

MAIL:

EMAIL DATED NOVEMBER 20, 2023 FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, WITH FY2025 BYLAW AMENDMENT REQUEST FROM SUSAN WOODWORTH, PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR

The Board discussed the memorandum received from Susan Woodworth, Parks and Recreation Director, dated November 20, 2023 in which she requested a cost of living increase for FY2025 for Recreation positions except that of Counselor/Instructor in Schedule C-3. Ms. Betti will ask Ms. Woodworth for clarification on the Counselor/Instructor position.

EMAIL DATED DECEMBER 20, 2023 FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, REGARDING STIPENDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LICENSES FOR THE POSITIONS OF WASTEWATER SUPERINTENDENT AND WATER SUPERINTENDENT FOR FY2025

Mr. Hickey and Ms. Betti explained the request. In each of the Water and Wastewater Departments, the KTEU Foreman was promoted to the Superintendent position, a Wage and Personnel position. The KTEU Labor contract provided a \$500 per year stipend for each required position license, and this practice was continued when the foremen became superintendents under Wage and Personnel. Mr. Hickey would like the Bylaw to be changed to reflect the current practice. It was suggested that this be done by adding an asterisk to both position titles in Schedule A, Water Superintendent and Wastewater Superintendent, with the following footnote:

* For each professional license required for the position or by the state the employee will receive a stipend equal to what is negotiated in the KTEU contract.

There was no discussion regarding the request and the change will be made in Schedule A.

EMAIL FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, DATED DECEMBER 20, 2023 REGARDING CHANGES TO THE POSITION OF OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR – WATER FOR FY2025

Ms. Betti explained the amendment request regarding the Office Administrator – Water position. The first part of the request was to change the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) status of the position to Exempt from Non-exempt in Schedule A. The second part of the request was to reclassify the position. Both an updated job description and JAQ had been submitted. Ms. Betti will review additional information received from GovHR before the next meeting.

EMAIL FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, DATED DECEMBER 20, 2023 REGARDING A NEW POSITION, SOCIAL SERVICES COORDINATOR, FOR FY2025

Mary Beth Lawton, Director of Elder Services, wanted to replace the vacant Outreach Coordinator position with a new position, Social Services Coordinator, based on the needs of the community and the department. Both a job description and JAQ had been submitted. Ms. Betti was waiting for additional information from GovHR on the JAQ.

EMAIL DATED DECEMBER 20, 2023 FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, REGARDING A GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR THE BYLAW FOR FY2025

A draft Grievance Procedure was submitted by Mr. Hickey and Ms. Betti for inclusion in the FY2025 Bylaw. The draft was provided by Labor Counsel and reviewed by Mr. Hickey. Mr. Hickey stated that the intent was to provide a grievance procedure for Wage and Personnel employees. Questions were asked about the hearing board change to the Board of Selectmen and possible conflicts with the existing Section 14, Personnel Appeals. A more lengthy discussion will be held at the next meeting.

EMAIL FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, DATED DECEMBER 23, 2023 REGARDING A NEW POSITION, PROCUREMENT OFFICER, FOR FY2025

A job description had been submitted for a new position, Procurement Officer, for FY2025. Ms. Betti will send the JAQ for the position.

EMAIL DATED DECEMBER 23, 2023 FROM TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, REGARDING A NEW POSITION, TREASURER/COLLECTOR, FOR FY2025

A job description had been submitted for a new position, Treasurer/Collector, for FY2025. Ms. Betti will send the JAQ. Mr. Hickey stated that the timeframe for the appointed position will be July 1, 2026.

ANY OTHER MAIL RECEIVED

No other mail needed to be discussed.

Mr. Hickey left the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES:

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 20, 2023

The draft meeting minutes for November 20, 2023 were reviewed. Motioned by Lorraine Burgio and seconded by Darlene Regan, the Board unanimously voted to approve the open session minutes of November 20, 2023 as written.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

DISCUSS DATE/AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 19, 2024 (HOLIDAY)

Since the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting will fall on a holiday, it will be rescheduled to Monday, February 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. The executive secretary will check on the availability of a meeting room. An additional meeting may be scheduled for Monday, February 26, 2024.

Agenda items for the next two meetings were discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

TOPICS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED TO BE DISCUSSED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

There was no new business that needed to be discussed.

ADJOURN:

Motioned by Lorraine Burgio and seconded by Darlene Regan, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer B. Scavone
Executive Secretary

Meeting Documents: (1) draft Annual Report for 2023 prepared by the executive secretary, (2) email from Tina Betti dated December 11, 2023 asking for clarification on Bylaw Section 15(h), (3) email dated November 21, 2023 from Tina Betti with materials from the Compensation Study, (4) JAQ submitted for the Wastewater Superintendent in an email from Elaine Fiore dated October 25, 2023, (5) email from Tina Betti dated November 6, 2023 regarding changes to Bylaw Sections 7(d), 7(g), 11(f) and 15(a) for FY2025, (6) draft wording for Section 7(d) prepared by the executive secretary, (7) email from Tina Betti dated November 20, 2023 with FY2025 Bylaw amendment request from Susan Woodworth, (8) email dated December 20, 2023 from Tina Betti regarding stipends for professional licenses for the Wastewater and Water Superintendent positions for FY2025, (9) email from Tina Betti dated December 20, 2023 regarding changes to the position of Office Administrator – Water for FY2025, (10) email from Tina Betti dated December 20, 2023 regarding a new position, Social Services Coordinator, for FY2025, (11) email dated December 20, 2023 from Tina Betti regarding a Grievance Procedure for the Bylaw for FY2025, (12) email from Tina Betti dated December 23, 2023 regarding a new position, Procurement Officer, for FY2025, (13) email dated December 23, 2023 from Tina Betti regarding a new position, Treasurer/Collector, for FY2025, and (14) draft meeting minutes for November 20, 2023