

Human Resources Committee

February 20, 2025

A virtual meeting of the Human Resources Committee was held on this date at 4:04 p.m. over Zoom.

Committee Members: Councilmember Caroline Parker (Chair), Councilmember Karl Brady (Vice-Chair), Councilmember William Tinkler, and Mayor William Cogswell (4:16 p.m.)

Also Present: Heather Pope (Interim Director of Human Resources), Melissa Cruthirds, Julia Copeland, Magalie Creech, Amy Wharton, Jennifer Cook, Donna Constance, Jennifer Strickland (Compensation and HR Data Manager), Lindsay Mazell (Talent Acquisition Manager), and Amy Wharton

Chair Parker called the meeting to order.

Invocation :

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence led by Chair Parker.

Approval of the November 21, 2024 , minutes

On a motion by Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Tinkler, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2024, Human Resources meeting.

New Business

a. Staffing and Retention Report

Ms. Strickland said the Fire Department was at 99% and the Police Department was 92%. By the end of 2024, the non-sworn departments had 4 temps in the Parks Department, 2 in Human Resources, and 4 in Stormwater. Several departments had a 30% vacancy rate or above, but most were under that 30% vacancy rate.

Next was the total turnover through December of each year. The Fire Department saw a slight increase in 2023 from 5.13% to 6.83% by the end of 2024. The Police Department was at 6.29% in 2023, and at the end of 2024, it was at 10.52%. The non-sworn in 2023 were at 11.92%, and at the end of 2024, they were at 12.63%.

Ms. Mazell said weekly meetings were held with their Workday consultant to fine-tune the recruitment process through the Workday system. They met with the Fire and Police Departments to fine-tune their Workday processes to ensure they were going well. They continued to work on reference guides as a training point for various functions in the system. December was a light month for new hires, with 17 full-time and part-time employees. In 2024, they had a total of 340 new hires. They began advertising their seasonal hires across the City for summer camps starting in May.

Next was sworn for 2024. The Police Department had 237 applicants, and 48 were hired. The Police Corps just started a new class, and the next class will be on June 9th. The Fire Department did a recruiting class. The last class had 483 applicants, and 337 did not complete the required information. 40 recruits graduated on January 17th, and the next class was scheduled to start on July 21st. The target was to hire 50 recruits, and that job posting was available now and was to close on May 2nd.

Chair Parker asked if the Police Department had a rolling application process, and if 48 out of the 237 applicants were hired.

Ms. Mazell said that was correct.

Chair Parker said there was a disparity between police, with 237 applicants, and fire, with 483 applicants, and only 48 were hired for police.

Ms. Mazell said that was correct.

Chair Parker asked if they had data or a reason why police had 237 applications and 483 for fire.

Ms. Mazell said they could get with their leadership, fire, and police. They went through disqualifiers when reviewing applications, and some would go through the parallel process for pre-employment testing.

Ms. Pope said this was a capacity issue because training classes held only so many people within the class. The police were sent to the academy, where only so many slots were given.

The Human Resources Ordinance Summary established their office or function within the City. The ordinance described the duties of their office to develop and enforce employee-related policy procedures and developmental programs. They were tasked with advising, directing, and monitoring employee relations, benefits, wellness training, grievances, job requirements, employee services, and other duties as directed by City leadership. The responsibilities of the director were also described. The director is appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Council. They were responsible for managing and administering employee services, developing and enforcing policy and organizational development programs, and acting as the City's EEO Officer to administer the EEO activity and compliance. They also advise, direct, and monitor the Human Resources activities.

The City started the Customer Service Initiative in 2006. These initiatives were printed on the back of the employees' badges, to be instilled and expected from a customer service standpoint. Employees were expected to respect others, be knowledgeable, own the moment, personalize their service, be ambassadors of their City, and be responsive. The program was called the CSI Committee, which was a committee of 18 employees, and throughout the year, their office solicited applications or nominations for people who exhibit customer service expectations. They were reviewed by the committee of those 18 employees and were done through an anonymous process. The selection was done quarterly, and there were two different categories. One was for internal customer service with three winners, and three for external customer service. This was to recognize employees and citizens who witnessed individual departments and divisions that model this behavior. At the quarterly breakfast, the Mayor presented them with an award and a certificate; they also received a monetary bonus. At the end of the year, all of the nominations were reviewed by the committee for the year, and the Susan Griffin Award was awarded to the employee or employees of the year. Susan Griffin was an employee for over 24 years and worked in Business and Neighborhood Services. She retired in 2021, and the award was named in her honor for the outstanding customer service that she demonstrated.

Chair Parker asked who appointed the 18-member committee.

Ms. Pope said they were appointed by nominations or taken from department heads for those employees, and they nominated people who exhibited high customer service.

Chair Parker asked if it was rolling or if people could apply to be on the committee.

Ms. Pope said it was rolling, but did not know how often the committee turned over.

Chair Parker asked if they knew how many anonymous internal and external nominations were received quarterly.

Ms. Pope said she did not know, but could get that information.

Chair Parker said it was important to discuss pay performance and pay review. Even though this was not a performance review, they offered CSI.

Ms. Pope said there was an informal way to acknowledge someone through the Workday System for doing a good job or to give them formal recognition.

The Assessing Employee Performance was for employees who started with the City. They were given an initial performance review where a goal was set between the employee and supervisor for their first six months with the City. After that, they would be reviewed annually for two major categories. The first was based on performance elements for job knowledge, quality of work, initiative, and safety, and the second was goal setting. There was also a self-appraisal where the employee, after the review period, had the opportunity to say how they did during the year and to identify any obstacles, needs, or desires for growth and development.

Chair Parker asked what percentage of supervisors or directors had done this.

Ms. Pope said this was more definitive, and it was more about the initial period when someone started than it was annually.

Chair Parker asked if an employee had an issue, and they wanted to remain anonymous if needed.

Ms. Pope said they did have a harassment and discrimination policy, which was outlined in the employee handbook. There were three different ways an employee could address their concerns. The first would be to report in writing to their department head, or they could report it to the Human Resources Department, which had an open-door policy, or reporting it anonymously made it harder to investigate, get details, and follow up.

Update on Human Resources Director search

Ms. Pope said they had a contract with Raftelis. They received 92 applications, which were being reviewed upon receipt. They expected to decide by March 3rd what they had received so far and to keep that position open to receive applications. There will be a candidate review meeting with the Mayor and Chief of Staff mid-March, then target virtual and final interviews at the end of March.

With no further business, the Committee adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m.

Clerk of Council's Office

Donna Constance