

Minutes

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

October 4, 2000 4:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Bernard Kramer, Ronald Pezze, Jerome Hudy, Michael Burr, and Jocelyn Bubolz

Also present: Director of Human Resources Tamara Potkay, Employee Representative Jenny Johnson, Mayor James Gatzke, Alderman Paul Scheuble, Assistant Director of Planning Mark Lake, reporter Corissa Jansen of the "Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel"

Chairperson Bernard Kramer called the Civil Service Commission Meeting of October 4, 2000 to order at 4:32 p.m.

Motion by Comm. Pezze to suspend the agenda to go right to Item II. Seconded by Comm. Hudy and approved.

CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEE COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

Comm. Pezze explained the Civil Service Commission's steps since receiving two employee communications on June 8, 2000. The Civil Service Commission (C.S.C.) took a serious look at complaints described in the communications and considered if there existed potential to adversely affect the employees' ability to carry out their job duties. The C.S.C. notified the Common Council and reiterated the scope of authority of the Common Council. Alderman Paul Scheuble (P.S.) stated that some of the scope of aldermanic duties was addressed in City Attorney Reilly's letter but the actual job description was not addressed.

The C.S.C. believes that an alderperson is viewed as having a cloak of apparent authority. P.S. said that based on the letters the C.S.C. received he could see why the Commission would look into things seriously. The C.S.C. indicated that the process took longer than anticipated, but it is our understanding that things have improved during this time. P.S. indicated that the term "alleged" should be added and that his behavior has not changed.

The C.S.C. is not prepared to take any formal action at this time but requests that P.S. be mindful of his status and limitations. P.S. said his view of what happened was different than described in the complaint. He also passed out a document he'd written (dated October 4th). P.S. added that he'd reflected and in the spirit of turning the other cheek, offered a letter of reconciliation earlier this summer.

P.S. stated his intention has always been to serve the needs of the people. P.S. also said that when he's around City Hall and a citizen has trouble expressing a need then he tries to advocate for the citizen or make recommendations to staff. Comm. Pezze stated that if P.S. is trying to learn both sides of a situation by interjecting himself into a conversation between a citizen and staff member conducting business, then the C.S.C. feels that this is not appropriate. It is a different situation if a citizen comes to P.S. and asks P.S. to intervene. Comm. Hudy stated that "we have to trust our employees to be knowledgeable." P.S. said that he agreed. During the discussion, P.S. indicated that he had interjected himself into conversations in the past, but that he did not interject himself in this situation. Comm. Pezze said that the C.S.C. is not here to take sides and that no one was questioning P.S.'s motives in serving New Berlin. P.S. said he had apologized for the comment that included the phrase about maybe being the next Mayor. He said the reason he apologized for the comment was because he realized that his comment could have been taken wrong.

Mayor Gatzke said he wasn't planning to speak but was concerned about some comments. He indicated that no alderperson should be coming in and addressing employees in any way they perceive is threatening to doing their job regardless of the situation.

P.S. stated when he reflects on his actions he realizes that employees are told to follow certain rules and he needs to respect this. Comm. Kramer said that it is the job of the Civil Service Commission to make sure that Civil Service employees are not threatened. P.S. said "thank you; I didn't threaten or intend to threaten. I do now respect the fact that desk conversations are private. In conclusion, I will not interfere with conversations at the counter."

At this point Comm. Pezze had to leave. It was agreed that wrap up on this item will occur at the next meeting.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON NEW POSITIONS, CHANGES ETC. FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

New Berlin did hire a new Division Engineer, Ron Schildt.

Effective April 1, 2001, the Fire Department will become a city department. It is not known at this point how many employees will be Civil Service employees.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of officers will be moved to the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be Monday, October 30, 2000 at 7:30 a.m.

Motion by Comm. Hudy to adjourn at 5:30 p.m. Seconded by Comm. Bubolz and carried unanimously.

Jocelyn Bubolz, Secretary
Civil Service Commission