



LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ▪ CITY OF BINGHAMTON

Hadassah Mativetsky, City Council President

Sarah Dinhofer, City Clerk

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BINGHAMTON
Committee Meeting Minutes: Employees
City Council Chambers, 38 Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY 13901
2:00 PM, Thursday March 21, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 2 PM by Chair Porter

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Porter, Dundon

Also Present: Sarah Dinhofer (City Clerk), Robert Cavanaugh (Councilmember), Kent Drake-Deese (Director of Personnel)

III. DISCUSSION

- Wages: Equity among City Hall employees, parity with other municipalities, and opportunities for improving wages in the upcoming CSEA bargaining period.
 - CM Dundon asks for clarity around desk audit process. Drake-Deese responds it was written into previous Collective Bargaining Agreement with CSEA that desk audits be conducted prior to next bargaining session. Purpose of audit is to either align stated job description with actual job duties or reclassify employees as necessary. Civil service titles cannot be changed except by NYS, so process must be tied to existing titles.
 - CM Dundon asks if department heads oversee the audit process. Drake-Deese responds it is a collaboration – met with department head, then met with employee, followed up with department head, then employee signed off.
 - CM Dundon asks if a new title assignment would be accompanied by a raise. Drake-Deese responds it is dependent on titles.
 - CM Porter asks if wages contribute to vacancies in job positions within City. Drake-Deese responds most likely yes. Role of negotiation process is to determine fair rate. Drake-Deese states working conditions, fringe benefits, and overall environment also play a role. General lack of knowledge around Civil Service positions also discourages applicants.
 - CM Porter asks if salary rates have been compared to similar municipalities. Drake-Deese responds this is part of current negotiation process.
 - CM Dundon asks if audit process was efficient. Drake-Deese responds not very efficient, likely due to some job descriptions not having been revisited since 1992. Process took 6 months, hope to increase efficiency going forward. However, process was overall effective.
 - CM Cavanaugh asks if desks audits would be helpful for other employees. Drake-Deese responds they are necessary, is considering audits on positions outside of CSEA in future.
- Civil service: Updating the exam, options for positions with this requirement, collaboration opportunities with state/other municipalities to improve.
 - Porter asks about current state of Civil Service Exam. Drake-Deese states test is widely considered to be archaic and inflexible by many municipalities. It is possible to create new title, but process is long and new exam must be created. Drake-Deese believes a big problem with finding applicants is lack of guarantee around job stability, as not everyone is good at test-taking and jobs are based only on highest score.
- Training: Management training opportunities, professional development for employees, updating standards

and performance expectations.

- CM Porter asks about current state of professional development. Drake-Deese responds that this topic was part of desk audits – answers were lacking. Believes City can do better to provide more opportunities for development and training. Emphasizes that lack of training for employees/supervisors combined with low wages and lack of job security makes positions in City overall less appealing to applicants.
- CM Dundon asks if more money is needed for training budget. Drake-Deese responds that more could potentially be helpful, but there may be existing pool of money to pull from.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 2:34 PM: Dundon

Second: Porter

All in Favor