

APPOINTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

12-DEC-2011

Chairman Joseph Cavo called the Committee meeting to order at 7:15pm.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Cavo and Gregg Seabury

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Fred Visconti due to illness.

Ex OFFICO COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Philip Curran, Donald Taylor, Shay Nagarsheth, Joseph Scozzafava, Warren Levy, Thomas J. Saadi, Duane E. Perkins, Benjamin Chianese, and Paul T. Rotello

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Mark Boughton, Wayne Sheppard, Chief of Staff, and Jean Natale, Legislative Assistant, and interested members of the public.

After making introductions, Chairman Cavo stated the purpose of the meeting and read the sections of the charter relating to the appointment of the Legislative Assistant. Mr. Cavo then referenced the letter Mayor Boughton sent to the City Council on December 1, 2011 and asked the Mayor to address the committee regarding the appointment of Legislative Assistant.

Mayor Boughton stated that Ms. Natale has worked for the City of Danbury for 17 years and has been performing the duties of Legislative Assistant for the past 8 years. During that time she has brought efficiencies to the office including reducing the FTEs from 2 to 1 ½. Ms. Natale is a pleasure to work with and finally, the Mayor stated that he sees Ms. Natale as an incumbent in the position; she currently has the title and performs the duties. He sees the appointment and confirmation as a reaffirmation. For these reasons and the reasons stated in the letter of December 1, 2011 the Mayor is pleased to recommend Ms. Natale to continue in the position.

Chairman Cavo then asked for discussion from the committee.

Mr. Seabury made a motion to recommend to the full Council to support the recommendation of Mayor Boughton for the position of Legislative Assistant to be filled by Jean Natale. The motion was seconded by Chairman Cavo.

Chairman Cavo asked for further discussion. Mr. Saadi raised a question regarding the formulation of a job description with input from the City Council. Mayor Boughton stated that there is a job description on file with Human Resources and that City Council input would encroach upon the executive administration of the city.

Mr. Saadi raised a question regarding the hours worked and where the compensation comes from in the budget. Mayor Boughton stated that this is a salaried position and the hours worked are determined by the Mayor, the Council President, and the Legislative Assistant. He added that the hours vary due to evening meetings which are a requirement of the position. Finally he stated that the compensation has been budgeted and that would remain the same.

Mr. Saadi asked if the position would fall under the new benefits package established for new hires. Mayor Boughton stated that the Benefits would not change as Ms. Natale is not a new hire but a continuing employee.

Mr. Saadi raised the question as to how the current employee could be replaced. Mayor Boughton stated that Ms. Natale would remain in the position until she left or was terminated under the City's disciplinary procedures.

Mr. Rotello asked if the City Council can assign the Legislative Assistant with additional duties. Mayor Boughton stated that it is not practical for additional duties to come from the 21 Council Members.

Mr. Chianese asked if there would be a list of mandatory meetings that Ms. Natale must attend. Chairman Cavo stated that Ms. Natale employs a pool of minute takers which has proven to be more cost effective. He continued that if the Council determines Ms. Natale's presence is of benefit, that he would ask her to attend.

Mr. Chianese raised a question about the procedure for hiring minute takers. Chairman Cavo stated that it is done under the call of the Council President. Mayor Boughton added that these hires follow the city procedures, and no one is hired without Mayor Boughton's signature.

Mr. Saadi raised a question of performance reviews. Mayor Boughton affirmed that the city's performance review process varied by collective bargaining group and position, for the "at will" positions that report to the Mayor he conducts an annual review where they discuss what is going well and what can be improved which usually takes about one hour.

Mr. Saadi asked if the Legislative Assistant would be taking minutes instead of an assistant. Mayor Boughton stated that they use a pool of minute takers to avoid paying overtime. There was a discussion of the new system and the pool being used for all departments.

Mr. Saadi asked why the position was not posted. Chairman Cavo stated that there was not a vacancy as Ms. Natale was currently doing the job, she obtained by election, and is performing the duties with proficiency and the charter change required the Mayor and City Council to reaffirm Ms. Natale in the position. Mayor Boughton stated that if there was a vacancy the position would be posted following the City's procedures.

Mr. Rotello asked if the position has a term limit. Chairman Cavo stated that the Charter did not apply term limits to the position.

Mr. Seabury moved the question. Chairman Cavo seconded. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

The vote on the main motion to recommend to the full Council to support the recommendation of Mayor Boughton for the position of Legislative Assistant to be filled by Jean Natale was unanimously approved.

There being no further business before the committee, Mr. Seabury moved to adjourn. Chairman Cavo seconded the motion. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cavo, Committee Chairman

Gregg Seabury