June 30, 2004

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Hon. Mayor Mark D. Boughton
Hon. Members of the Common Council

Re: Director of Personnel

Dear Council Member:

I have waited for a situation, which by any standard of good government is completely unacceptable, to be rectified for the benefit of the tax payers of the City of Danbury. I am, of course, referring to the vacant position of Director of Personnel.

Although this position has been vacant since January of this year, the former director continues to receive a full salary and benefits. The former director is receiving this compensation despite the fact that she has performed no work at all for almost six full months.

The Charter of the City of Danbury calls for, and requires by law, a personnel director. Yet the Mayor's budget for Fiscal Year 2004-2005 transfers much of the duties of the personnel director to the Director of Finance. This is in direct conflict with and in violation of the Charter.

I find this to be contrary to all tenets of good, responsible, and honest government. To abrogate the Charter by moving the responsibilities of the Personnel Director to the Finance Department is not only an act of arrogance, it is illegal and patently irresponsible.

Both the Directors of Personnel and Finance have many duties associated with their positions. To move the duties of Personnel Director to the Finance Department and expect the duties that go with that position to be performed with competence is a tacit admission that there is not enough work for the Director of Finance and her staff. If there is enough work, and it is being done in an efficient manner, then the added duties, by any measure of reason, must detract from that efficiency.

Just as troubling is the continued payments of salary and benefits to the former Director of Personnel. If she is no longer on the job then she should not be receiving compensation. There is no legal basis for her being paid without performing her duties. There can have been no settlement of any dispute with the former Director because such a settlement must be approved by the Common Council; the only organ of city government that may approve such payments. Further, she cannot possibly be a consultant or advisor to the Personnel Department because there is no provision in either the 2003-2004 or 2004-2005 budgets to pay for such an advisor.

If the former Director is performing a consulting function then the terms of her employment and the duties she has performed pursuant to those terms must be disclosed. In addition, the Common Council must make the decision that this work is commensurate with the full salary and benefits of the position of Personnel Director.

It is well known that the former Director of Personnel has moved from her previous residence and is not responsive to telephone calls. If the former Director has moved out of the area, refuses telephone contact, and has not been seen in City Hall for a half a year, then how can it be said she is in the employ of the City?

It is apparent that this situation is not going to be acted upon by this administration. Moreover since this situation has been caused by this administration, I am respectfully requesting that the Common Council form a committee to formally investigate this situation and report to the full Council in the shortest possible time.

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