



Personnel Committee - Board of Representatives

Mary Fedeli, Co-Chair

Anabel Figueroa, Co-Chair

Committee Minutes

Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: This meeting was held remotely on www.zoom.com

The Personnel Committee met remotely at the above date and time. In attendance were Co-Chairs Fedeli and Figueroa and Committee Member Reps. DePina, Lion, McMullen, Nabel, Patterson, and Zelinsky. Absent: Rep. Pendell. Also present; Reps. Adams, Morson, Sandford, Sherwood and Stella; Kathy Emmett, Corporation Counsel; Director of Al Cava, Director of Human Resources; and Ted Jankowski, Director of Public Safety and Health.

Co-Chair Figueroa called the meeting to order 7:02 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. P30.059	APPROVAL; Employment Contract with Trevor Roach as Chief of the Fire Department. 10/07/20 – Submitted by Mayor Martin	Committee Approved 7-0-1

Director Cava explained:

- Fire Chief contract is a 4 year contract with option of 1 year extension

Director Jankowski discussed:

- The City wanted to retain Chief Roach because he is an asset to the City of Stamford
- Under the Direction of Chief Roach the City of Stamford has become one of the State's top Fire Department
- He unified the Paid Fire and Volunteer Fire Departments
- Showed Great Leadership and Proactive skills during Pandemic and other City emergencies as the Director of Emergency Management Services
- Best water resources department in the State of Connecticut

Director Emmett added:

- Mayor's position was to not lose a highly qualified chief
- Pension terms allows chiefs to retire and collect their pension; this is an incentive for chiefs because they can go and work in another City
- It is common practice that chiefs retire, collect their pension and return to work for the City

- There has been a request submitted to the fire pension board to amend the pension plan to include in-service pensions

Co-Chair Figueroa asked since the pension board has not approved the requested amendment, is it okay for the Board of Reps to approve this contract. Director Emmett said yes the Board can take action on this contract, no matter the end result of the motion to the pension board.

Co-Chair Fedeli believes the contract is separate from collective bargaining and should not be discussed.

Rep McMullen asked if there is written rules regarding in-service pensions. Director Emmett said no and stated the pension board did grant the pensions, and it is not the Board of Representatives decision to grant them. This is a legal situation with several lawyers involved, and this is something that has been done by chiefs and non-chief. The motion would add a specific term in the pension plan to acknowledge in service pensions.

Rep. Nabel stated she believes we're making a mistake in combining the issues of collective bargaining with this contract.

Rep. Zelinsky asked the contract length and salary. Director Cava confirmed December 3, 2020 to December 3, 2024 and confirmed his current salary is \$156,526, which includes the reduced salary to help with the financial impact of the pandemic.

Board members questioned the validity of his retirement and rehiring.

Director Emmett stated that it is not appropriate to mix the Pension Board functions of being fiduciaries for the pension trust funds and the Board of Representatives is determining whether or not to approve a contract of employment.

Director Jankowski stated that when the chiefs retire the City is saving money because the City no longer has to pay health or pension benefits.

Rep. Sherwood would like to know the amount of money he's receiving yearly from salary and pension combined. The yearly pension amount was not available. Rep. Sherwood stated that constituents dislike employees retiring, collecting pension and being rehired and feels it is time to revamp how this situation is handled. Also feels the Board should strive for transparency and should ask more detailed questions.

Director Emmett stated the cost to the city for his pension has been incurred over the years and he has contributed to it, and what he is receiving is what he has earned and counted for.

Reps. Fedeli, DePina and Lion agreed that the committee needs to be more consistent with questions and reviewing contracts and to do what is required from the Board of Representatives.

Co-Chair Figueroa asked if there was a search for a new Fire Chief. Director Jankowski said the City did not search for a new Fire chief because they feel like they have the best candidate, also a new chief would cost tax payers more money.

Rep. Morson stated he agrees with many points made. He said the rules that allow a person to retire, collect a pension and take another job exist. There's no rules that say they have to do a search or have to leave and then rehire back. These issues should be addressed but we should not hold up this contract.

Rep. McMullen questioned if pensions are public information. Director Emmett said they are subject to Freedom of Information.

A motion to approve this item was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-1. (Fedeli, DePina, Lion, McMullen, Nabel, Patterson, and Zelinsky in favor; Figueroa abstained)

Respectfully submitted,
Anabel Figueroa, Co-Chair

This meeting is on [Video](#).