



Personnel Committee - Board of Representatives

Anabel Figueroa, Chair

Mary Fedeli, Vice Chair

Committee Minutes

Date: Wednesday December 21, 2022

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: *The meeting was held remotely.*

The Personnel Committee met at the above date and time. In attendance were Chair Figueroa, Vice Chair Fedeli, and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Berns, Goldberg, Jean-Louis, Mays, Patterson and Pavia. Also present were Reps. Baxter, Campbell, Coleman, Curtis, Di Costanzo, Grunberger, Miller, Moore, Sherwood, Stella, Summerville, Tomas, and Walston; Bridget Fox, Mayor's Office; Doug Dalena, Legal Dept.; Al Cava, Human Resources; Dr. Tamu Lucero, Ryan Fealey, Chris Soules, and Andy George, BOE; Attorney Thomas Mooney, Shipman & Goodwin; and five members of the public.

Chair Figueroa called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
11. P31.027	ORDINANCE for publication; Amending Chapter 40 of the Code of Ordinances, to add Article LIV, Sections 40-198 Through 40-201– Public Safety Community Engagement Liaison. 09/27/22 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons 10/17/22 – Approved by Committee 7-0-0 11/07/22 – Held by Full Board 11/21/22 – Held by Committee 5-3-0	Committee Approved 5-3-1

Mr. Cava explained that the Administration has addressed the concerns of the BOR from the last meeting. Amendments were made to the job description and hours.

Ms. Fox reviewed the [attached presentation](#). This position has been designed to plan and coordinate community relations between the Administration, City, Fire Dept., Police Dept., and Public Safety Dept. It will report to the Director of Public Safety, Health & Welfare, with an open door to the Mayor. This position serves at the pleasure of the Mayor, and will not require a nomination or appointment process.

¹ Video Time Stamp: 00:01:25

There was Committee discussion:

- This position should have been publicly posted to give others a chance to apply.
- If this position is about community engagement, the candidate should be able to speak Spanish, since the Hispanic community is a large and growing part of Stamford.
- The Mayor should be able to appoint some positions without always going through the BOR.
- This should not be created through an ordinance. There is no accountability.
- Mr. Dalena stated that there is nothing in the current ordinances or Charter that requires an appointed position to be posted to the public. The Mayor is politically accountable to the residents. The Mayor's cabinet has the authority to appoint positions through whatever process they deem appropriate and in best practice.
- Several members of the Mayor's cabinet have contracts that have gone through the Personnel Committee so there is oversight. There seems to be no oversight of this position.
- This position puts an additional layer between the Mayor and the public regarding safety issues, so there will now be less contact.
- BOR should respect the Mayor's judgement in selecting the team that reports to her and not stand in the way of every decision the Mayor wants to make.
- It is important to make sure this ordinance cannot be corrupted in the future, with future Mayors and cabinets.
- Can this position be a Special Assistant to the Mayor, instead of going through an ordinance?
- Stamford's population has grown and the public safety needs have grown. It makes sense for the Director of Public Safety to have a liaison to handle some key communications tasks.
- The newly appointed Director of Public Safety should be given a chance to see what needs to be done. If he eventually feels there is a need for this position, then it can move forward.

A motion to approve Item # 1 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 5-3-1 (Reps. Fedeli, Adams, Goldberg, Mays, and Patterson in favor; Reps. Figueroa, Berns, and Jean-Louis opposed; Rep. Pavia abstained).

- ²2. [P31.029](#) REJECTION; Tentative Agreement between the Stamford Board of Education and the Stamford Administration Unit, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026.
12/06/22 – Submitted by Chris Soules
11/28/22 – [Negative Advisory Opinion](#) Issued by Board of Finance **Committee Failed to Reject 3-5-0**

Mr. Mooney gave an overview of this agreement:

- Contract is for a three-year term commencing July 1, 2023.

² Video Time Stamp: 01:55:00

- There will be salary increases each year for a total of 10.51% for the entire contract. (1st year 4.4%, 2nd year 3.1%, 3rd year 3.0%).
- This will make salaries more competitive for administrators in Stamford.
- The settlement averages 3.5% each year, and inflation has been 7.0% for the past two years. BOE feels this is an appropriate settlement.
- Arbitration holds no guarantee of a better settlement. The settlement is an average of 0.6% higher than Connecticut average, which is marginal.
- Most of the administrators are at the top step.
- BOE wants to retain current administrators because they have done a very good job during the past few difficult years.
- There are two language changes:
 - Superintendent now has the authority to make administrative assignments at all levels.
 - BOE has the right to make negotiations on the insurance plans if the current plan continues to increase at a rate that invites consideration of alternatives.

There was Committee discussion:

- Stamford should not lose out quality administrators. This area is competitive, and has a very high cost of living.
- BOF gave a negative advisory opinion on this contract. While the BOR does not have to follow this, it usually does follow the BOF advisory opinions.
- Mr. George explained this contract is for 78 administrators, mostly principals, vice principals, and some central office positions. High School principals earn \$204,716,000 yearly. Middle and elementary school principals earn \$184,387,000.
- Cost of this settlement is approximately \$600K in first year, and \$400K in second and third years.
- The BOR needs to be fiscally responsible because these increases are coming out of taxpayer money.
- Norwalk principals make between 5-10K more than Stamford
- Settlements in Connecticut in the current year average an 8.72% increase.
- Dr. Lucero stated that less people are going into the teaching profession (which leads to administrative positions) so Stamford needs to remain competitive.
- We do not know the tax increases that are coming to Stamford residents due to the revaluation. This is a difficult time right now to be having this level of increase in the agreement.

A motion to reject Item #2 was made, seconded, and failed by a vote of 3-5-0 (Reps. Figueroa, Fedeli, and Patterson in favor; Reps. Adams, Berns, Goldberg, Mays, and Pavia opposed).

³³. P31.030 REVIEW; [Sec. C3-10-4](#) – Temporary Absence or Disability of the Mayor – Compensation of the Acting Mayor.
12/07/22 – Submitted by Rep. Stella

Report Made

³ Video Time Stamp: 02:56:30

Rep. Stella explained he put this item on the agenda because this year the Charter is being reviewed. The Charter states the acting Mayor is supposed to be compensated and the BOR determines the compensation. The BOR has never done this.

Mr. Cava explained the Pay Plan provides the compensation of the Mayor. There is a specific formula for the Mayor's compensation. It is currently \$191,449.00 per year.

The Committee discussed the following:

- Some Representatives said there should be compensation for an acting Mayor.
- Some Representatives said this is a volunteer board and if acting as Mayor is part of the position, there should not be any compensation.
- If someone wants to get paid for it, that is a Fiscal item.
- Usually what acting Mayors have to do is very minimal. It is up to each person, and this is already in the Charter.
- The person should not have to request to be paid, payment should be automatic.
- There is no specific dollar amount in the Charter, that is something which could be looked into.
- Most Representatives were unaware of this section of the Charter, and it was not the intention of the BOR to purposely withhold compensation in the past.

Under a Suspension of the Rules:

- ⁴⁴. [P31.031](#) REJECTION; Tentative Agreement between the City of Stamford and Stamford BOE Employees Association - Custodian & Maintenance Workers July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2025 with Reopener Provisions for 2021-25.
12/19/22 – Submitted by Chris Soules
12/08/22 – [Positive Advisory Opinion](#) Issued by Board of Finance

Committee Failed to Reject 0-7-0

A motion to take up Item #4 under Suspension of the Rules was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Figueroa, Fedeli, Adams, Berns, Goldberg, Mays, and Patterson in favor).

Mr. Mooney gave an overview of this agreement:

- This is both a BOE and a City contract, with the BOE taking the lead in negotiations.
- A settlement was reached with a focus on language changes to operate the school district more efficiently.
- The four-year contract includes retroactive pay back to July 1, 2021. The wage increase for that year was 2.5%. The wage increase for current year and following two years is 4%, which is an average pay increase.
- New agreement will allow the BOE to hire substitute custodian and maintenance workers at a much lower rate than permanent employees. Currently, overtime rates have to be paid to cover absences.

⁴ Video Time Stamp: 03:36:25

- Estimate of the premium is about \$160,000, with a savings of a projected \$182,000 due to the language changes. These language changes will reduce costs for the long term.

Chair Figueroa stated that a 4% increase is insignificant to an employee who makes a lower wage, compared to the same increase for an employee who makes a higher wage.

A motion to reject Item #4 was made, seconded, and failed by a vote of 0-7-0 (Reps. Figueroa, Fedeli, Adams, Berns, Goldberg, Mays, and Patterson opposed).

Chair Figueroa adjourned the meeting at 10:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anabel Figueroa, Chair

This meeting is on [Video](#)