



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING

November 10, 2011 @ 5:00 p.m. at the Oran White Civic Center

Minutes

The City of Tool City Council Workshop Meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm. Present were Council Members Candage, Wright, Phillips and Reeder. Quorum was established with Mayor Pitts presiding. Councilman Williams was late.

ITEM 1 Discussion on employee benefits. Mayor opened discussion by stating that although the City did budget for a 5% increase for medical insurance across the board once we received the renewal information from Blue Cross the increase amounted to a 13.8% increase. Initially that amounted to a \$10,000 deficit however after figuring that this increase will not take effect until after the first of the year and by prorating the amount to take off the 90 day probation period for the two new hires the difference was only \$3000-\$3500 difference. The monthly difference is \$76.87 more per employee per month. Mayor also informed everyone that Ameritas (Dental and Vision Insurance) and Ft Dearborn (Life Insurance) has no increase. The City's record of agent Richard Haynie provided cost estimates from 3 other medical insurance providers in hopes to lower cost and keep the same coverage. The three companies were United Healthcare, Humana and Aetna. While all three were comparable in cost United Health has virtually the same coverage as BCBS for \$200 less per month per employee. The biggest concern with Untied Health Care is Urgent Care copay (\$150 vs. current rate of \$100) rate and the out of network out of pocket expense (\$2000 out of network deductible vs. \$1000 combined in and out of network deductible). Councilman Phillips and Reeder both stated that they have been members with United Healthcare for years and have been very pleased with the service they have received. Chief Loscuito requested that Mayor provide a provider and hospital list for each company that was being considered so that employees can ensure that the doctors they currently use would be covered under the new potential insurance carrier. Mayor Pitts agreed and asked that administration obtained the lists and put it on the November agenda to be voted on.

Mayor Pitts stated that as everyone was aware Rebecca Reeves had resigned from the court and those interviews for her replacement have been underway. He also informed everyone that Judge Peterson has a primary prospect that currently hold the same position in Gun Barrel where she also works with Judge Peterson. Mayor explained that he had lunch with Rhonda and her prospective new hire. After having lunch Mayor Pitts stated that the applicant would not be his first choice. Councilman Candage informed everyone that Judge Peterson's choice is the most qualified for the position. Mayor Pitts stated that his opposition is not her ability or training. His concern is that she has a negative reputation and that her personality and demeanor would not be well suited for City Hall. Mayor Pitts then gave Judge Peterson an opportunity to state her opinion. Rhonda advised that the applicant, Doreen Young, has been with the court in Gun Barrel for two years and has lived in the area for over five years. She also said that Ms. Young has already attended the forty hour clerk school required by state and has begun courses for her level certification. She went on to say that the other clerk in Gun Barrel City that currently works with Doreen refuses to cross train her out of fear for losing job security and that news has spread of her looking for other employment which has made for an uncomfortable work environment. Mayor Pitts reminded everyone that City policy states that hiring authority falls to the Mayor but he would prefer to hire someone that both he and the Judge are comfortable with which is why he called the meeting to discuss it further. He said there would be no vote tonight and that he encouraged Council to think about it and come to him and the Judge with any questions. Councilman Phillips asked if there were any other applicants.



Mayor responded that there were two others that were favorably viewed. One was Mike Grant's wife who has previous experience in the Court and the other is currently employed at Wal-Mart. Councilman Phillips questioned whether or not Darla Ferguson's application had been considered and Judge Peterson interjected that she has submitted an application but she had "other issues" to discuss. Mayor Pitts reiterated that Doreen has the qualifications and from continuity standpoint is capable. His concern is that the personality conflicts may not be worth it. Councilman Phillips said that he didn't feel it was right that the Mayor hires people and 90 days later Council had to vote to keep or terminate an employee that they knew nothing about. Mayor Pitts said that they should get involved and speak with the supervisor during the probationary period and see how the employee is doing. Councilman Williams suggested that Doreen be interviewed again and Mayor said that he had already interviewed her and that perhaps they needed to change City Policy if they refuse to ratify the Mayor's decision. Chief Loscuito warned against re-interviewing Ms. Young if they were not going to re-interview other applicants as well. He said that no one needed to appear to be given preferential treatment. Mayor Pitts cautioned Council that if they chose to do independent interviews to be careful on what you say and how you conduct yourself during the interview. At this time Mayor Pitts appointed Nelson Wright and Nathan Reeder to sit in on the next round of interviews. Councilman Reeder quickly refused to accept the appointment suggesting Councilman Phillips take his place. Judge Peterson asked Councilman Williams if he would be willing to accept the appointment and he agreed. Mayor stated to re-interview Ferguson and the other three.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Councilman Reeder, second by Councilman Wright. Motion passed 4-0 at 5:45pm.

Passed and approved this 15th day of December 2011.