SEP - 5 2014

Northampton Elected Officials Compensation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2014

In Attendance: Todd Thompson, Jennifer Higgins, Trey Fortier, Douglas Loux, Linda Matson, Vicki Baum-Hommes

Absent: Dennis Helmus

Guests: City Clerk Wendy Mazza, City Councilor Paul Spector, Smith Vocational Trustees Michael Cahillane and John Cotton

Wendy Mazza

Wendy commented that the city clerk has a dual role; not only is she an elected official, but she is also a department head. As such, she supervises other employees and has administrative oversight over her department, the office of the city clerk.

Wendy believes that the clerk salary is not adequate. She suggested that to arrive at fair compensation, we should look at comparable communities, and particularly cities and not towns. The duties and responsibilities of a city clerk are much greater and more complex than those of a town clerk.

Paul Spector

Paul said that the health insurance benefit he receives as a city councilor is more valuable to him than the amount of his salary.

He has already announced that he is not running for reelection, so could be frank with his opinions. He felt that his average workload as a councilor is about 10-12 hours per week. The council president and at-large councilors spend significantly more time than that. The workload of school committee members is not comparable; rather than the current 2:1 salary ratio between councilors and school committee, he believes that 3:1 would be more in line with their relative responsibilities. Also, the council president and at-large members should be more highly compensated than ward councilors.

When asked, Paul expressed the opinion that the mayor's salary is too low.

Michael Cahillane & John Cotton

The trustees explained the structure of Smith Vocational and their role as trustees. Smith Voke is a unique institution in Massachusetts, operating under the terms of the will of

Oliver Smith as well as under the jurisdiction of the city, with an independent board of trustees, elected by the voters of Northampton.

Committee Business

All guests left, and the committee went on to its business. The issue of qualitative data was brought up, and discussion was deferred until the next meeting.

The next meeting will open with public comment, and then we plan to move on to benchmarking. Up for discussion will be process; what do we do with the data we have gathered? Are job descriptions of elected officials available?

The minutes of the July 24 meeting were approved unanimously.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 4, at 6:30 PM in the Lilly Library Community Room.

Minutes submitted by Douglas Loux