

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING ON AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WEST HARTFORD PENSION PLAN TO INCORPORATE PROVISIONS IMPLEMENTING A RETIREMENT INCENTIVE PLAN FOR PART A AND PART B MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT EMPLOYEES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

August 2, 1994

Council Chambers

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President Sandy F. Klebanoff called the hearing to order at 7:46 p.m.

Present were Councilors Robert Bouvier, Owen Eagan, Sandy F. Klebanoff, Charles R. Matties, Patrick McCabe, Madeline S. McKernan, Larry Price, Andy Schatz and Alfred Turco.

President Klebanoff: Just for clarification please, I have in front of me a substitute. Is it the substitute that we are hearing?

Mrs. Glass: It is.

President Klebanoff: Thank you. I just wanted to get that on the record. Mr. Feldman.

Barry M. Feldman, Town Manager: Madam Mayor, you have before you an ordinance that will provide an incentive for current Town employees who are now or soon to be eligible for a normal or an early retirement. I recall that we've talked on occasion about the need to encourage active duty personnel to consider retiring so we continue in our effort to trim the workforce in a more humane way than perhaps available elsewhere. I would be happy if there are questions about actual pieces are contained in this incentive. I'm not sure how much detail you would like me to get into. Maybe it would be helpful to explain that the incentive that you are looking at or the pieces that contained in the ordinance are very similar to the incentives that we offered several years ago, not exact but similar and that forms the basis for the incentive program for the current year.

President Klebanoff: Thank you, Mr. Feldman. Are there questions from the Council? Mr. Matties and then Mrs. Glass.

Councilor Matties: Did you want to say something?

Mrs. Glass: I just want to correct the record. This is not the substitute. The substitute is the one we heard in a previous hearing. That was the substitute ordinance. This is the ordinance as submitted to us and should not have the word substitute on it. This is item 10. It was item 11 on the last agenda.

President Klebanoff: Thank you. That is why I was

confused.

Mrs. Glass: The two numbers are sort of reversed.

President Klebanoff: Thank you. Disregard my comment please. Mr. Matties.

Councilor Matties: Barry, I asked you this question in the committee meeting and I want to ask you in public, your assurance that we are not going to get ourselves into a situation similar to what our neighbors did where they had this big early retirement and then ended up hiring them as consultants afterward. Do you feel you have adequate control or feel so that there will be benefits but not these other liabilities?

Mr. Feldman: Madam Mayor, it is certainly a fair question. Let me see if I can respond. If you should adopt this ordinance and as it then would be offered, we have potentially I believe 99 people who are eligible. I don't expect nor I'm sure you don't expect 99 people to take the incentive. I do expect that we will have a number of people who do exercise it and a great majority of those positions will not be replaced. I wish I could give you a firm number. I can't do that because I honestly don't know who will retire. There are certain positions as I'm sure we all understand will be replaced. I give you my word that we will minimize the number of those positions that we replace.

I can think of one person and you all know that person very well, if he chooses to retire and it depends upon when he chooses to retire, in fact, I may want to retain him for several months only because we have a person now being trained to succeed him and if in my opinion, and hopefully with your support, if I don't think that training period is long enough, in fact, I may invite him back in under some type of minimal limited agreement, but that so I don't mislead you Mr. Matties, would be the only one that I can think of where we would need to hire somebody back as a quote consultant and that would be for a minimal number of weeks or months. Beyond that, I don't envision doing anything close to what anybody else in the area has done. These incentives are I think modest, attractive enough I hope to draw the attention of those employees who are interested in retiring but certainly not rich enough to in any way I think become an item of controversy or conversation as some other area communities have offered.

Councilor Matties: Thank you.

President Klebanoff: Thank you, Mr. Feldman. Are there further comments? Mr. Bouvier.

Councilor Bouvier: This is a follow up to Chuck's question.

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This retirement incentive was offered prior to that the year before and has anyone out of that group elected or has come back as a consultant?

Mr. Feldman: Madam Mayor, the answer to that is no.

Councilor Bouvier: Thank you.

President Klebanoff: Are there further questions or comments? If not, there was no sign up sheet. Is there anyone here who wishes to address the Council on this issue? Please come to the podium and give us your name and address.

Mr. Genduso: My name is Domenico Genduso, 80 Blue Ridge Lane, West Hartford. Madam Mayor, members of the Town Council, I want to say a few words about this, what Mr. Matties mentioned already. I want to go further. If you approve this ordinance here, please put in a clause that says that the person that retires and then like Mr. Feldman said maybe he needs this one gentleman or somebody else, cannot be hired at a higher level of salary than he was before because we have been saying what happened in Hartford. People that were making \$40,000 and retired and then they were hired as consultants, are now making \$60,000 or by the hours and making lots of money and I don't want the same racket to happen in West Hartford. Thank you.

President Klebanoff: Thank you. Anyone else wish to address the Council? Questions, comments from the Council? If not we will close this public hearing.

The hearing adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Norma W. Cronin  
Recording Secretary