

Postponed Items For Next Meeting Discussion

From: Treasurer (treasurer@eastchinatewnship.org)

To: allenreichle@yahoo.com

Date: Friday, June 7, 2024 at 12:47 PM EDT

Hello!

In this email you will find the document below, prepared by myself regarding the postponed issues we are discussing. There is also the Parks Manager Position agreement for reference that was signed/adopted in Jan 2024. I have looked through file cabinets and in our G drive to find the current Township Manager contract to review for comparison to the new Utilities Director position and for possible insurance add on. I did not find it anywhere and a request I made Monday night to Cindy has gone unanswered as to where to find it or a copy of it. (Why?) Perhaps I need to request a FOIA, but being a Township Board member and this also being an item of discussion that the Board is deciding upon, I would not think I need to request the information through a FOIA.

Hello fellow Board Members:

I am sending this letter to every one of you, just not in group format as to not violate the quorum/open meetings act. I have been thinking about the postponed items from Monday's meeting and the whole process this has taken on just does not sit right with me. I feel there is much more to consider and this is not just an easy 'insurance or no insurance decision'. A decision that needs more time and not to be taken too lightly as it has many working parts to it. I am having a rough time justifying the Utilities Director position and the salary amount/benefits for the position when we initially hired a Township Manager, with another large salary/benefits package that was supposed to be covering those areas. Now I know the Township Manager has stated those areas are not her expertise and needs help and our supervisor has been filling in the gaps. Fine. If we are hiring another person to do the things we had originally expected our Township Manager to do, why are we now going to pay two people to do that job? I understand the new person will be more actively involved, but why are we not looking at a deduction in salary for the roles she is relinquishing?

SNOWBALL STARTED \$ (paying 2 people)

With this new position, to obtain the candidate wanted, we now 'have to' offer insurance because the candidate had insurance at his last position. However, we do not offer insurance to our non-union contract employees nor part time employees. Why are we not negotiating with the candidate with different scenarios like offering money for the candidate to get his own insurance (one example)?

SNOWBALL ROLLING \$\$ (paying for extra benefits)

So, the Township now looks for insurance costs to try to obtain the candidate and finds we need to have a minimum of 2 or 3 employees, depending on insurance company and automatically decides we need to now offer insurance to 2 current employees plus the new candidate. Is this new employee worth offering high insurance costs to the other 2 employees as well? Not to mention two employees where one has a contract already, receiving opt-out insurance monthly benefit of \$750.00 and has not even mentioned breaking/rewriting or updating her contract and one employee who is not even qualified to receive insurance benefits based on her job classification of being seasonal, part time and average hour she is supposed to work. Not to

mention, this person had a very contentious position that we just got settled in a job agreement this January and has received raises in the past from the Park Commission because she did not have insurance. Are we lowering her pay rate to provide insurance? Are we making a part time employee pay her own insurance when she does not work full time hours? I just do not see how this is going to be fair to current employees and is opening a big can of worms.

SNOWBALL ROLLING ON \$\$\$ (paying for 3 people's big insurance costs, possible paying more hours for part time employee to full time)

Say it is decided to go ahead with the insurance for the three employees... New contracts would need to be written including the insurance for the two current employees, including how the part time employee would qualify now, which was said to be minimum of 30 hours (but township policy says 37). Then a new township policy needs to be rewritten as well on insurance coverage. Full time union office staff now makes less than the part time seasonal employee—and they talk about morale all the time! Union office staff now seeking how they can start working only 30 hours and get paid full benefits as others are now (one was already asking advice out on Facebook about it)!

SNOWBALL GROWING \$\$\$\$ (paying lawyers to redo contracts, paying more benefits to part time employees, union issues and hard renegotiating their contracts because of the change)

Where does it stop? It may seem crazy but it is definitely already starting down this path. Where does the Township stop bleeding money and adjusting to needs of others just because it would be nice to do so? Don't get me wrong, I feel for certain unfortunate circumstances of others, but we cannot simply make knee jerk decisions based on what employees want at the current moment. Contracts are a double edge sword; they lock you into those specific terms for said amount of time. It may be great at the time you are signing, but times change and now it may not be so great. That is how it goes in any job. May I remind you that this was a contract that she had a lawyer draw up and vehemently wanted to make sure every board member voted Yes for and was good with it or she was not going to stay. The Township is a small business and we have a budget to uphold for the taxpayers in this community. Taking on huge insurance costs that only rise higher over time buckle businesses. We are not obligated by ACA, due to the number of employees we have, to offer insurance for non-union employees and certainly not part time ones. I am not saying there is not a solution to this, but offering insurance to all three employees does not seem to be the best way without costing the Township thousands of dollars. It is not in the best interest of the Township financially.

SOME ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS:

1. Offer the new candidate extra pay so he can get his own insurance. Leave the other two as they stand in their current contract/agreement.
2. Make the new candidate a union employee where he can get insurance for less than we would pay non-union. He certainly qualifies working in utilities. Leave other two employees as they stand in their current contract/agreement.
3. Adjust Township Manager's salary to reflect the roles she is not doing anymore that the Utilities Director will be doing.
4. If you are offering insurance to all 3, make them pay a portion of the insurance premium rather than the township footing the entire bill. Township Manager's current stipend for insurance opt out can be what the township pays for her insurance and she can pay the rest of the premium.
5. Make the Parks Manager a union employee to qualify for her insurance. The union has a minimum standard of hours to qualify you for insurance coverage or you must self-pay for your insurance premium. This way she can still be seasonal and in the off season or when she does not qualify by hours worked, she can pay the rest of her premium herself. Becoming union would also require her to punch a time clock and adhere to all other union requirements as the rest of the union employees do.

These are just a few, simpler solutions that should be considered. As the possibility of providing insurance to the new candidate is tied to two other employees potentially getting insurance as

well, I do not feel we can just approve one without looking at the other two. That is, unless the solution is to just provide the new candidate the option.
Thank you for reading and I hope the Board can come to a mutual agreement regarding these issues that works for both the township and the employees involved that is also cost effective. I feel we should meet in either a special meeting ahead of the board meeting, which will need to be posted soon if decided upon or a workshop or within the normal meeting.

Regards,

Nicole Hart

Treasurer, East China Charter Township

Notary Public

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PARKS MANAGER JOB DESCR adopted 2024.docx

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