

RAHWAY VALLEY SEWERAGE AUTHORITY

Personnel Committee Meeting

Minutes

May 12, 2016

Commissioner LoForte, Personnel Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m.

Commissioner LoForte read the statement on “Open Public Meetings Law”.

“In accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the inclusion of the date, time and place in a Notice forwarded to The Star Ledger, the Home News Tribune and the Clerk of each of the eleven member municipalities on May 5, 2016.

If any member of this body believes that this meeting is being held in violation of the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, please state your objection and the reasons for same at this time.”

.... Hearing no objections, we shall proceed with our regularly scheduled meeting.

Roll Call

The following members were present:

Michael Furci	for the Township of Springfield
Stephen D. Greet	for the Borough of Garwood
Robert B. LaCosta	for the Township of Scotch Plains
Louis C. Lambe	for the Township of Cranford
Richard J. LoForte	for the Borough of Kenilworth
Frank G. Mazzarella	for the Township of Clark
Robert Rachlin	for the City of Rahway
Scott L. Thompson	for the Township of Woodbridge

The following members were absent:

Allen Chin	for the Town of Westfield
Michael Connelly	for the Borough of Roselle Park
John J. Tomaine	for the Borough of Mountainside

The following were also present:

James J. Meehan	Executive Director
Robert J. Materna	Secretary-Treasurer
Joanne Grimes	Purchasing Agent / Office Manager / Board Sec.
Dennis A. Estis, Esq.	General Counsel, Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith - via phone
Maja Obradovic, Esq.	Counsel, Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis
Donna Corris	Human Resource Manager
Dan Ward	Superintendent
John Buonocore	Chief Engineer
Anthony Gencarelli	Mgr. of Regulatory Compliance
Andrew Sasso	Operations Manager
Doug Reno	Biosolids Energy Supervisor
Thomas Watters	RVSA Union Employee
Cisco Rivera	RVSA Union Employee

The following were also present (Cont'd.):

Riley Blake	RVSA Union Employee
Tyrone Johnson	USW Representative

New Business

A Rice Notice was sent to Thomas Watters, advising him that he was going to be the subject of a matter at this meeting. Mr. Watters chose to have the matter related to him to be held in Open Session and asked to address the Commissioners.

Mr. Meehan explained to the Commissioners that Mr. Watters, an RVSA Employee, had applied to the Pension Bureau for his pension and subsequently submitted revised applications on five different occasions. An Agreement was reached between the Authority and Mr. Watters' Union Representative whereby Mr. Watters agreed to retire in August 2016. Subsequently, the Authority was advised by the Pension Bureau that Mr. Watters had filed another amendment to his retirement application seeking to extend his employment into 2017. Mr. Meehan sent a letter to Mr. Watters stating that his request was denied and that his employment will end on August 1, 2016.

Pursuant to his request, Mr. Watters told the Board that he is a Veteran of the Vietnam War and had worked for the Authority for 37+ years. He explained that he had thought that he was in worse health than he apparently is; and that is why he filed for extensions on his Pension, so that if he died, his wife would receive his benefits. He asked the Board to consider extending his retirement date and said he would sign a paper saying he will retire in 2017.

Mr. Meehan stated that a decision had already been made and noted that the Board might want to discuss this in private session; however, they would not take action unless they wish to change Mr. Meehan's decision.

Mr. Mazzarella stated that he feels uncomfortable debating this with Mr. Watters present. Mr. Estis stated Mr. Watters could waive his Rice right so that it could be discussed in closed session or he (Mr. Estis) would have to research this further; he also noted that as this is a Committee Meeting, no action can be taken.

Mr. Thompson said that there is an Agreement signed by the Union Vice President dated March 25, 2014. He asked Mr. Watters why he chose to wait until the last minute to advise the Board that he didn't agree with the Agreement signed by his Union Representative. Mr. Watters stated that he never saw the Agreement. Mr. Thompson asked, "your Union Representative never provided you with a copy of the Agreement?" Mr. Watters stated "unfortunately I don't believe he did". Mr. Meehan said the document shows that Mr. Watters was copied.

Mr. LoForte stated that you submitted a letter in early 2014 stating that you planned to retire in two years and the Union Representative signed an Agreement codifying that. Mr. Watters said he never saw those documents.

After further discussion, Mr. LoForte asked Mr. Watters if he had any thing else to add and Mr. Watters said no. At this point, he agreed to allow the Board to deliberate in Closed Session and not in his presence. Mr. LoForte thanked him for his time.

Mr. Watters, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Rivera, Mr. Blake, Mr. Reno, Mr. Gencarelli and Mr. Sasso left the meeting.

Closed Session

Mr. LaCosta made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lambe, to go into Closed Session at this time, 8:08 p.m. to discuss personnel matters, specifically Mr. Watters Retirement Application, Retirement Recognition, update on Union Negotiations, Company Vehicle Policy and Employee Travel Reimbursement. The motion was approved by those present. Mr. Chin, Mr. Connelly, and Mr. Tomaine were absent.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rachlin, to return to the Regular Order of Business at 8:29 p.m. The motion was approved. Mr. Chin, Mr. Connelly, and Mr. Tomaine were absent.

Adjournment

As there was no further business, on motion of Mr. Lambe, seconded by Mr. LaCosta, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. The motion was approved by those present.

Chairman

Robert J. Materna
Robert J. Materna, Secretary-Treasurer

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