



CITY OF ANSONIA

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

Special Meeting – December 19, 2013

Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the Ansonia Board of Aldermen was called to order at 7 p.m. by Aldermanic President Philip Tripp. All those present rose and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, led by Alderman Denice Hunt.

Roll Call

The secretary called the roll:

Edward Adamowski, D1 – present
Charles Stowe, R1 – present
Philip Tripp, R2 – present
Lorie Vaccaro, R2 – present
Denice Hunt, D3 – present
Joseph Jeanette, D3 – present
Anthony DeLucia, D4 – absent

Jerome Fainer, D4 – present
Anthony Cassetti, R5 – present
Joan Radin, R5 – present
Matthew Edo, R6 – present
Patrick Henri, R6 – present
David Blackwell, Jr., R7 – present
Daniel Evans, R7 – present

President Tripp declared a quorum of 13 present, 1 absent.

Call of the Meeting

The Secretary read aloud the call of the meeting as follows:

City of Ansonia Board of Aldermen
Special Meeting – Aldermanic Chambers
Thursday, December 19, 2013 – 7 p.m.

Agenda

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consideration of Salary Resolutions for City and Town Clerk; Chief Administrative Officer; and Grant Writer
4. Consideration of Ordinance altering compensation system in Town and City Clerk's Office
5. Designation of a member of the Board of Aldermen to be Tax Incentive Program Review Committee

6. Adjournment

Consideration of Salary Resolution – Chief Administrative Officer

The Salary Committee of the Board of Aldermen introduced the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, THAT this salary and wage shall be adopted effective December 12, 2013, the day on which the Salary Personnel Committee met and voted to approve an annual salary for the position of Chief Administrative Officer:

DEPARTMENT: MAYOR'S OFFICE
TITLE: CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SALARY: \$72,000

Alderman Henri MOVED to discuss the Salary Resolution for Chief Administrative Officer; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Henri noted that we have the resume, he's been vetted.

Alderman Adamowski asked why the board is giving out \$20,000 and \$30,000 raises. He expressed that he understands that there will be a savings in the Mayor's salary, but his salary will go up each year and eventually the salaries will just progressively increase across the board. This is something that everybody said could not happen. If these salaries are being awarded based on what qualifications the candidates bring to the table, there are many people in the City that are grossly underpaid for their qualifications but are still working in their positions. Additionally, the fact that two Ansonia residents that held these two positions were let go from their jobs and both positions were filled with out of town individuals.

Alderman Fainer congratulated everybody and apologized for not attending the full Board meeting, and explained that he had fallen just before the meeting.

He stated, the Mayor's salary is set by Resolution and will go up every year. Saying this is all a savings giving these people raises is beyond me. The big issue I read in the paper all the time during elections was, "we're going to get rid of \$1 million worth of administrative salaries at City Hall" and in two weeks you're raising people's salaries and getting rid of people.

Alderman Henri stated, I don't have any problem hiring anybody from out of town if they're the most qualified person. Just because someone held the job before doesn't mean they should stay on. Those people were brought on at the former mayor's prerogative. We have a new mayor who is looking for people he can work with. It's completely fair. They've been vetted. I wouldn't say it's a raise because

these people haven't had the position before. These jobs very well will have a larger and broader job scope, more in the job description, more responsibility. I have to trust that the Salary Committee, the Mayor, and the team who vetted these people have done the right thing. Time will tell. The good thing about not having Ansonia residents in place is that if they're not doing the job it's easy to let them go.

Alderman Radin stated, I feel they should have stayed at the same salaries and they should be hired on an interim basis with 3-6 months probation. If they prove they can do the job then they are deserving of a better salary. I believe the \$30,000 savings from the Mayor's salary should stay in the budget. I'm a senior citizen and many of my constituents are making just enough to survive on. People in my Ward are very upset with the whole thing. I feel these people should be on probation rather than start at a higher salary and they should have to prove themselves.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, they are highly qualified people. They both bring a lot to the table and they are at will employees. If they don't perform we can terminate them. They have no contracts. We had to go out of town, unfortunately to find these qualifications and their resumes jump out at you – they are both overly qualified for these positions. You get what you pay for.

Alderman Blackwell stated, I sat on the Salary Committee and had the pleasure of meeting both individuals. I like that they're from out of town for a couple of reasons. Number one, we have no loyalty to them as far as who they know in town, as far as voters, as far as family affiliation. If they don't perform we have no problem letting them go. I believe that is a plus as far as hiring. And as far as the salaries, I understand Alderman Adamowski's concern that if you look at it it's a raise in the salary, but it's still an overall cost savings. That was one of our main concerns going into this. Mr. Tymiak will hold two positions – the same two positions that Ms. Kolakowski held – Human Resources and Administrative Aide to the Mayor. We combined those two positions and formed one position with a \$2,000 increase in salary for those two positions but it's still an overall decrease in the budget. We wanted to make sure the budget stayed down and not necessarily the salary. As long as we have qualified people in there to move forward. I believe these two people will concentrate on Economic Development and bringing business in. That is where their strong points are, and that is why they were chosen. The plan is to bring business into town and increase the tax base. We can offset the salaries and pay them over the years through what they bring into the City. Thank you.

Alderman Stowe stated, I would like to acknowledge that there were other people here serving the City. This is the first time I ran for reelection and I didn't really enjoy running for reelection because watching people that you get to know here, and liking them, and seeing them not here any more is not where I'm used to coming from. I came from the business world and usually you become like family. It was very sad for me to see people let go but the reality is, if you want to come and work here you are under the Mayor's prerogative. If the mayor loses, you can lose your

job. It's unfortunate, that part, but that's the way it is. I was involved with Salary - these two people are overqualified and they want to be involved in something where they can say "I helped rebuild that." I understand. That's my look. When I was in business I bought equipment I didn't want to buy because I knew that better equipment would help me finish a job quicker and make money. If these people don't perform, they're gone. That's just the way it is. It was getting very comfortable here for many years and I wish we had a good economy and I didn't have to be here. I came here because of how bad the economy was and watching the City of Ansonia fall apart. Voters chose a new team and I hope they give us an opportunity to show that we mean business. I hope we can get ahead and if we can't, at the end of this year I expect no tax increase. I expect absolutely no tax increase whatsoever. If some department has to cut and another one gets a little, but I expect zero from my end here. If we can't do that then we are disappointing the people that voted for us, and that's on us.

Alderman Henri MOVED to ADOPT the Resolution for Chief Administrative Officer; SECONDED by Alderman Edo.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski		x	
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	X		
Hunt	X		
Jeanette	x		
DeLucia			
Fainer		x	
Cassetti	x		
Radin		x	
Edo	x		
Henri	x		
Blackwell	x		
Evans		x	
Tripp	x		
TOTALS:	9	4	

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 9 Yes, 4 No.

Consideration of Salary Resolution – Grant Writer

The Salary Committee of the Board of Aldermen introduced the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, THAT this salary and wage shall be adopted effective December 12,

2013, the day on which the Salary Personnel Committee met and voted to approve an annual salary for the position of Grant Writer:

DEPARTMENT: CITY GOVERNMENT

TITLE: GRANT WRITER

SALARY: \$55,000

Alderman Henri moved to discuss; SECONDED by Alderman Edo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

President Tripp explained, you all have the resume and job description, same situation.

Alderman Stowe stated, our Grant Writer is across the hall right now at Economic Development Commission. One of the reasons I was willing to see a pay increase was the Brownfield experience. She authored something on Brownfields. She agreed she would participate at the Economic Development meetings and that was a strong point for me. I hate to see an increase in salary but I expect this person is going to bring dividends here with her ability – she's got a lot of experience. Again it is the Mayor's prerogative to have who he chooses to work with him and he does have to have a good working relationship with who he works with. I thought the choice was excellent and we're blessed to get this person.

Alderman Evans stated, I don't feel like I was elected to raise salaries and spend money. I just don't think that's why I was sent here. I am not prepared to face my constituents and tell him that the positions that we had before, we let those people go and we hired some new people and we're going to pay them a little bit more because they're really good people, trust me on this. I am not prepared to have that conversation. When you add in the benefits the people in the private sector are not getting that. They don't have the benefits that the City workers have. They're working 12-14 hours a day and they're not making that. I am not prepared to have that conversation, I am not prepared to do that.

President Tripp stated, I would like to read some numbers into the record. For Chief Administrative Officer, for \$72,000, this is a consolidation of two positions – Government Liaison at \$53,000 and Personnel Director at \$16,000 a year, which is already being paid out. This is only an additional \$2,600 taken from the difference between what Mayor Della Volpe was earning and Mayor Cassetti is earning. It was \$2,600 taken from the \$37,000 drop in Mayor's salary. Moving forward to the Grant Writer, the last Grant Writer was being paid \$50,000 a year. The additional \$5,000 also comes out of the savings in the Mayor's salary. Even with these two small increases, there still is a savings to the City this year of \$30,000.

Alderman Henri stated, if you compare what we're paying to who we have, and the outgoing people, the qualifications, the experience – on paper the new people

bring a lot more to the table. The job scopes will be broader, more interactive. Overall City Hall will be saving money on salaries. And you get what you pay for. These people are really overqualified for these jobs but they want to pitch in and do it for us. So we give them a shot. If it doesn't work out, goodbye.

Alderman Evans stated, just recently the City of Ansonia interviewed several applicants nationwide for a Director of Economic Development and would up getting someone from New Mexico for a salary of \$54,000. We made a nationwide search for somebody we're going to pay \$54,000. We found somebody right next door in Derby just like that – somebody we're going to pay \$72,000 - the most qualified person we could find right there.

Alderman Fainer stated, you're giving these people raises but saving the City money. It's not saving the City money. I've been hearing this pitch for the last year on this Board – “we've got to cut back,” and then, you vote people all these raises. You had qualified people, and not because it was my wife – my wife brought this town a lot of money \$6 or \$7 million – and if that's not doing her job I don't know who was. Giving raises is not saving the City money, because the Mayor's salary has got to go up next year. We nicked and dimed the non-union people, some people got \$300 raises that have been here a long time. Now people just walk in the door and it's \$2,600, \$5,000. We got a guy from New Mexico for less money than we're paying.

Alderman Adamowski stated, I know everybody keeps bringing up qualifications. They are very qualified for their positions. That is not the issue. The issue is the savings is only temporary because the Mayor's salary is going to increase. These are eventually going to be salary increases. You cannot slice that any other way. The salaries are going up. As the Mayor's salary rises per resolution, the salaries of City Hall are going to increase. As Alderman Evans said, we have to go out and tell the people, “well, we raised salaries.”

The other question I have is, back to the qualifications. People that have been here 10 years – I know one person who has furthered their education within the City, who has constantly done more schooling over the past 10 years, constantly building his resume. He is probably \$20-\$30,000 underpaid. Should he come in and say, “Hey listen, guys, I've been getting qualified over the past 10 years, I've been going to school, so I want what I'm worth, I want \$30,000 more because that's what the guy in Derby gets or that's what the guy in Seymour gets.” What people think they're worth and what we, the taxpayers, can afford to pay, are completely two different things. We are not a City that can pay high salaries to anybody that walks in the door because they're qualified. You can't.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, I'm looking at her resume. Yes, qualifications. She has Housing Authority experience with the City of Waterbury. God knows we have issues with HUD. She brings that to the table as well as her Brownfields experience. I did

read her Brownfield publication. It's very interesting and informative. She was in charge of putting together a \$330 million budget for the City of Waterbury in 2007. She really has her hands involved in the meat and potatoes of a City budget, as well as the Housing Authority issues, as well as Brownfields expertise, which we have a few acres of Brownfields. We're talking about an increase in salary by \$5,000. I feel the pain Mr. Edwards and Mr. Adamowski about raising the salaries, it's something we're all going to have to deal with, but I think she brings enough to the table to warrant the increase.

Alderman Fainer to MOVED to ADOPT the Resolution for the Salary of the Grant Writer; SECONDED by Alderman Radin.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski		X	
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	X		
Hunt	X		
Jeanette	X		
DeLucia			
Fainer		X	
Cassetti	X		
Radin		X	
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
Evans		X	
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	9	4	

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 9 Yes, 4 No.

Consideration of Salary Resolution – Town and City Clerk

The Salary Committee of the Board of Aldermen introduced the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, THAT this salary and wage shall be adopted effective December 12, 2013, the day on which the Salary Personnel Committee met and voted to approve an annual salary for the position of Town and City Clerk:

DEPARTMENT: TOWN AND CITY CLERK
TITLE: TOWN AND CITY CLERK
SALARY: \$72,000

Alderman Henri MOVED to discuss the resolution; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Alderman Radin asked which should be discussed first, the Ordinance changing the way the Town and City Clerk is paid, or the Resolution setting her salary.

After discussion with Counsel, it was decided to continue the discussion and action on this Resolution, and then take up the Ordinance. Attorney Teodosio noted that the salary must be set before January 6th or it will not be able to be adjusted until after the term is served out.

Alderman Henri stated, talk about price increases. I am really against this salary because I think we can get someone for a lot less than this. But time is of the essence - we need to pass this along with the ordinance because a new year is coming up, a new person is coming into the office, and to be fair we have to get this straightened out so when they get into office they know what's going on. To be fair to them we need to do this and expedite this. Salary has met and has come up with a number of \$72,000. I don't agree with it, but I'll vote yes for it because one, it's less than what the average of town clerks get throughout the state, and also because it's my understanding that the office will operate for the next two years with three people in the Clerk's office and not four. We are actually saying that this position will get \$72,000 - you don't have to be qualified, you don't have to graduate high school, you don't have to have any experience. If you are popular and have the right letter after your name depending on which way the political wind is blowing, in two years there is an election, somebody can come in with no qualifications, never had a job, and get \$72,000 with on the job training. I'll still vote yes with the hope that the Charter Revision Commission will look at this issue to investigate and see if we can change it from an elected position and the Salary Committee can look at it again and knock this number down by about \$20,000.

Alderman Stowe stated, I think the salary for the Economic Development Director is more than \$55,000. I can't remember. As far as the salary for this individual, based upon the salary for the last clerk there is a lot more being paid out than there is with this salary. If the adjustment agreed upon is made we'll only have three instead of four clerks in the office, we're looking at significant savings here for the City of Ansonia which dwarfs the money we're talking about with the last two individuals. Dave could get raises for 10 years and not get enough pay raises for the savings that's just going to happen in that one office. This group is obligated to shake up how this has been run and bring savings to the people. I have every confidence that after what has been done in this first month that we're going to achieve a lot of savings for the City's residents. There will be some cost increases to do that. I will appreciate if every Board member would investigate all of their paperwork and what the other members of this City Hall are doing before they vote. They may change their vote. Savings is what it's all about. Sometimes you have to spend

more money to save money.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, I believe the incumbent Town Clerk elect has years of experience in that office. I feel she is right there - overqualified versus a person coming in with zero experience. I feel she is very qualified. Her salary is going to be right in line with similar towns our size. Derby is \$76,000 Wilton is \$77,000, Berlin is \$73,000 Granby is \$68,000. She brings experience and I believe the salary for what we're getting is right on. Thank you.

Alderman Blackwell stated, I sat on the Salary Committee with several other Aldermen and this isn't a number we just came up with out of thin air. Several things were considered – her experience, salaries in other towns with similar populations as ours. Derby's town clerk is also elected and is a non-union position which mimics our system at this time. Our overall objective on all of these hires is to save money. With the combining of the positions, the other two, and the Mayor's decrease in salary, the City is still at a savings of \$30,000. The past Town Clerk was averaging about \$75,000 in salary. We decided \$72,000 was a fair number for everybody. It stays in line with other towns where the clerks are elected and non-union, and actually it's the lowest one. She is more than qualified to do the job; I believe \$72,000 is on the lower side. She is also getting a retirement from the City which the previous clerk did not get. We have to pay the people what the positions are worth. She should be compensated accordingly. This was also contingent on her not using her powers and electing from within the office instead of appointing somebody she can, again, an overall savings for the City. With this going forward she will appoint from within her office and cut the office from four down to three, saving the City about \$70,000 between salary and benefits. We spent a lot of time on this and people should look at what we did and approve it.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to ADOPT the Resolution; SECONDED by Alderman Fainer. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski	x		
Stowe	x		
Vaccaro	x		
Hunt	X		
Jeanette	X		
DeLucia			
Fainer	X		
Cassetti	X		
Radin		X	
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
Evans		X	

Tripp	x		
TOTALS:	11	2	

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 11 Yes, 2 No.

Ordinance Altering Compensation in the Town and City Clerk’s Office

ORDINANCE
COMPENSATION OF TOWN AND CITY CLERK

Pursuant to the powers vested in the Ansonia Board of Aldermen by virtue of Section 93 of the Charter of the City of Ansonia and pursuant to CGS Section 7-34b, the Board of Aldermen hereby declares:

- A. The system by which the Town and City Clerk is compensated is in need of clarification.

THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF ANSONIA THAT:

- 1. The following Ordinance of the Ansonia City Code be enacted:

Sec. 2-33 – Compensation of Town and City Clerk.

The Town and City Clerk is a salaried position with the annual salary fixed by the Board of Aldermen. All fees and commissions paid to the Town and City Clerk shall be forwarded to the Town Treasurer for deposit into the General Fund account of the City of Ansonia.

This ordinance shall be effective upon passage.

Alderman Edo MOVED to ADOPT the Ordinance; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro.

Alderman Henri stated, time is of the essence. To be fair to the incoming Town and City Clerk we have to act this week. If we pass this with 12 yes votes it's a done deal. If not, in order to take care of it by the end of the year, we have to have a public hearing and another special Board of Aldermen meeting next week to resolve this.

Alderman Stowe asked how much it will cost for this to go to public hearing.

Attorney Teodosio stated, to publish it in the paper it's about \$175. It would need to be published and it would need to have a certain time relative to the meeting.

Alderman Evans stated, I would be surprised if it doesn't pass; can anybody give me a reason why they would not vote for it?

Alderman Blackwell stated, the current system is a broken system. Mrs. Lynch's attorney agrees, the Comptroller agrees. Everybody we've spoken with agrees that the system needs to be changed. This Ordinance states that the incoming Town Clerk will receive a base salary and not a stipend with all the fees. There are a lot of problems with the previous system that are coming to light now. This ordinance should pass – it is in the best interest of everybody. The current system is not any fault of the previous administration. It should be passed. We will collect all the fees that go to the City, there will be a record of everything, there is transparency and it's very important that we move forward with this.

Alderman Henri stated, this is a money maker for the City. The Clerk gets paid, the State gets what the State gets and the rest goes into the General Fund. There will be more money in the City's bank account.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, I would like to read a quote from The Valley Independent Sentinel. It's from Joyce Messina, Glastonbury's Town Clerk and President of the Connecticut Town Clerks' Association. "The system Ansonia uses was once popular but has all but disappeared. I don't know what drove the change, maybe it was just a fact of ethics. If you're removed from paying yourself your fees there is less likelihood that you have the urge to fool around with anything." Nobody in this room has ever accused anyone in the Clerk's Office of any wrongdoing. This is just the way it has operated for too many years. The vast majority of Connecticut municipalities pay flat salaries for Town Clerks. I feel we are spot on with this action.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Adamowski	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	X		
Hunt	X		
Jeanette	X		
DeLucia			
Fainer	X		
Cassetti	X		
Radin	X		
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
Evans	X		
Tripp	X		

TOTALS:	13	0	
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The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 13 Yes, 0 No.

Designation of a member of the Board of Aldermen to be Tax Incentive Program Review Committee

Peter Kelly, Executive Director, Economic Development

In June, this Board of Aldermen passed the City of Ansonia Tax Incentive Program. The policy and procedures require the City to establish a Tax Incentive Program Review Committee. In order to fully constitute this, five members representatives have to be appointed, the Mayor, myself as Economic Development Director, and three designees – one from Economic Development Commission, one from Planning & Zoning Commission, and one from the Board of Aldermen. My recommendation is Alderman Stowe as he is already the liaison to the Economic Development Commission for the sake of continuity. Time of the essence as the Committee actually has an applicant to the program and we would like to review that application and then submit proposals to the Board of Aldermen.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to appoint Alderman Charles Stowe to the Tax Incentive Program Review Committee, Board of Aldermen representative; SECONDED by Alderman Evans. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Adjournment

Alderman Fainer MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen