

**COMMITTEE MEETING
LAKE PLEASANT, NY
THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5, 2015**

**INTERNAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
9:00 AM**

Members present: Bob Edwards, John Frey, and Brian Wells

Also present: Bill Farber, Brian Towers, Clark Seaman, Phil Snyder and Kimberly Byrne

Personnel Officer Byrne handed out information regarding buyouts.

Officer Byrne reviewed the information on the cost of the buyouts for the year 2015. The average buyout for the County has been around 34 individuals.

Mr. Farber asked if this reflects the singles, families and doubles, Officer Byrne stated yes.

Mr. Edwards asked if there is a difference in the buyout regardless of the plan. Officer Byrne stated it is the same amount for every person.

Mr. Farber stated this was discussed at the last meeting and we really need to give Officer Byrne direction so that we can move forward with this.

Mr. Seaman asked about feedback, Mr. Towers stated he has heard from a few that they would prefer cash.

Mr. Farber feels that they haven't done very much to ask the people in general that take advantage of this. We have heard from the people who would rather have it the other way, not having to pay tax on the money. As long as we continue with the vendor, we will continue to have the people that are troubled by the fact that their asking for more documentation than our prior vendor. The IRS rules are required with no way around it but it really has to do with the tax.

Discussion continued on other municipality practices with buyouts.

If we went to quarterly for the buyout we would have to establish some time frame Mr. Farber stated.

Mr. Frey stated at the end of the year it is recorded as income for purposes of retirement too. Does New York State look at it as income?

Mr. Farber stated they would have to get answers from Treasurer Hunt whether this payment would be considered for retirement purposes.

The email from Burnham talked about the money they do for uniform allowance and they do it more like that but the challenge is that it's taxable.

Mr. Farber reported this is something Treasurer Hunt will have to look into regarding the taxable part as well as when the payments should go out. It works really well with a Highway Superintendent where it is salary and there is not a 40 hour per week piece attached to it, with hourly rates it makes it much harder.

Mr. Frey asked for each member's opinion around the table.

Mr. Edwards stated there are a couple of issues, cash and the total dollars they are looking at.

Mr. Farber suggested that Officer Byrne have a conversation with Treasurer Hunt so that they know the net amount that they are talking about versus the \$1,800.00.

Mr. Towers reported his town is \$3,000.00. What they look at is what the employee's contribution is going to be for the other insurance, for a wife or a husband. It's not putting any more money in their pocket it's just trying to take this to a level playing field. We haven't changed that since it went into effect.

Mr. Seaman asked how they administer the money.

Mr. Towers replied they give them a single cash payment in July. They pay payroll taxes on it, they don't end up with \$3,000.00 and it is done in a separate check.

Mr. Farber asked what that nets out at, Mr. Towers stated he didn't know but guessed around \$2,200.00.

Mr. Frey likes the card better because it is cleaner and the employee get the whole benefit, they get the \$1,800.00. Discussion continued.

Officer Byrne suggested they bump up the buyout. She will talk to employees about how they feel about a cash buyout.

Mr. Farber reported on the second agenda there is a resolution approving the handbook. He feels they have discussed all the issues but wants to make sure everyone is comfortable with it. The only issue that has surfaced since their last discussions is continuing education reimbursement. There were three ideas kicking around, one was just say no if it doesn't fit, two was if it's more peripheral to the county and more of a benefit to the employee than to the county but is good for the county. The last was we ought to have a per employee cap for any continuing education that an employee wants to take which is not required for either their current duties with the county or a solid approved plan for the evolution of the department. Mr. Farber continued to discuss.

Mr. Wells stated he likes the idea of a cap, but if the county pays for their education, they are going to sign something where they are going to stay with us awhile. That was one of the changes in the handbook that we will be voting to adopt.

Mr. Towers asked if in the old policy there was a cap or a percentage written in.

Officer Byrne stated no.

Mr. Farber asked going forward are we interested in investing \$250 to \$500 a year or when it is more peripheral we simply pay 25% of it rather than the full cost.

Mr. Towers stated he can see them in a situation of having an employee that is missing a qualification and we are going to get our hand slapped seriously if we don't get this employee educated so we pay for it.

Mr. Farber replied that the handbook currently allows us to do that and maybe the right answer here is to say no.

Mr. Frey suggested the employee gets reimbursed upon certificate of completion.

Mr. Farber stated Director Franko's point is the employee will take the training either way. If you want her to stay your chances will be better if they support her rather than say no. He thinks this is a rational way to look at it if you're invested in the employee.

Mr. Farber suggested they leave it out of the handbook and deal with it case by case. The committee members agreed.

Officer Byrne asked if they want her to change the HRA in the handbook.

Mr. Farber stated yes, just change the \$1,800.00 to \$2,200.00 in the book and when we approve the resolution today accepting the changes in the handbook it will be done.