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THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

REPORT 03-2003

Minutes of a meeting of the Human Resources Committee, held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Tuesday, April 8, 2003, commencing at 9:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Nicholson, Chair; Bailey; Harry; Saracino; Smeaton; Thomson.

Staff: Messrs. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Nicol, Commissioner, Human Resources Department; Ms. Gilroy, Deputy Regional Clerk.

Staff (Part-time): Messrs. Banting, Director, Legal Services; Brcic, Director, Water and Wastewater Services; Ms. Elliott, Director, Organizational Development and Compensation Services; Ms. Fontana, Director of Corporate Health Services and Employee Relations; Mr. Hagar, Employee Relations Manager.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

20. Councillor Smeaton declared an indirect pecuniary interest with respect to any matters related to the Homes for the Aged, as he is employed by a seniors' home, and he therefore vacated the Committee Room, and took no part in the discussion of, or voting, on these matters.

CLOSED SESSION

21. Moved by Councillor Thomson
Seconded by Councillor Smeaton

That this Committee do now meet in Closed Session for purposes of receiving information of a confidential nature relating to personnel matters.

Carried.

22. Deputation
Christian Labour Association of Canada

Mr. Michael Reid, Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), together with Mr. Jim Huggins, Health Care Aide, and Ms. Schottlander, RPN, attended Committee on behalf of Deer Park Villa employees. The Region of Niagara has purchased Deer Park Villa, and the presenters expressed comments as to their union affiliation preference and associated terms and conditions of employment when the Region becomes their employer.

Moved by Councillor Harry
Seconded by Councillor Bailey

That the presentation by Mr. Michael Reid and members of the Christian Labour Association of Canada, be received and that the Region continue to work with CLAC.

Carried.

23. Ratification of Collective Agreement –
Ontario Nurses' Association and its Local 9 – Public Health

Mr. Nicol, Commissioner Human Resources, provided an overview of Report HR 13-2003.

Moved by Councillor Smeaton
Seconded by Councillor Harry

That Report HR 13-2003 – Ratification of Collective Agreement – Ontario Nurses' Association and its Local 9 – Public Health, regarding the successful negotiations of a thirty-six (36) month collective agreement between the Ontario Nurses' Association and its Local 9 – Public Health and the Regional Municipality of Niagara, for the period of April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2005, be approved as per the Memorandum of Settlement, and as reported by the Commissioner of Human Resources.

That the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk be authorized to execute the collective agreement on behalf of the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

That Regional Council members be polled by phone or e-mail to ratify this decision, effective the date of the poll.

Carried.

24. Financial Support for Regional Staff Charged or Penalized

Mr. Nicol, Commissioner Human Resources, provided an overview of Report HR 19-2003/CSD 53-2003/ PWA 64-2003. Mr. Banting, Director, Legal Services, responded to questions from Committee.

Moved by Councillor Harry
Seconded by Councillor Thomson

That Report HR 19-2003/CSD 53-2003/ PWA 64-2003 – Financial Support for Regional Staff Charged or Penalized, be received; and

That, effective immediately, Regional Council approve the granting of financial support for Regional staff of the Water and Wastewater Division and Councillors, who are charged with offences or ordered to pay Administrative Monetary Penalties, even though they were not negligent and did carry out their duties in a good, faithful, and duly diligent manner.

That a corporate policy be prepared as quickly as possible, to provide more specific guidelines on Councillor and Employee Legal Indemnification.

That Regional Council members be polled by phone or e-mail to ratify this decision, effective the date of the poll.

Carried.

25. Moved by Councillor Saracino
Seconded by Councilor Bailey

That this Committee do now rise with report.

Carried.

HUMAN RESOURCES

26. Outside Legal and Paralegal Services
Request for Proposals #2002-RFP-18

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Trojan provided details of the Request for Proposal process. Discussion followed with respect to whether there would be potential for sustainable savings if the number of in-house legal staff was to be increased, thereby decreasing the reliance on external legal firms.

Moved by Councillor Smeaton
Seconded by Councillor Thomson

That Report HR 14-2003/ COM 18-2003/ CSD 47-2003/ DPD 50-2003 – Outside Legal and Paralegal Services Request for Proposals #2002-RFP-18, be deferred pending further information.

That staff be directed to provide Council with a further report, which includes a comparison of staff lawyers in other Regional and local area municipalities, and reviews areas of law that might be more cost effectively addressed in-house

That local law firms be contacted, through local bar associations, as to their interest in responding to the request for proposals.

Carried.

(Note: Report HR 14-2003/COM 18-2003/CSD 47-2003/DPD 50-2003, is attached to the Community and Health Services Committee minutes.)

DEPUTATION

27. Repetitive Strain Injuries

Mr. Bruce Allen, Vice-President – Local 199, CAW provided information with respect to repetitive strain injuries, particularly its causes, effects, and fiscal impact on the workplace. He noted that these injuries are preventable through the use of ergonomics and requested Committee's support for a Canada-wide ergonomic standard.

Moved by Councillor Thomson
Seconded by Councillor Saracino

Whereas repetitive strain injuries commonly develop into crippling disorders permanently injuring workers to the point where they are prevented from working or leading normal lives; and

Whereas the consequent costs are enormous in terms of diminishing productivity and health care; and

Whereas the use of ergonomics to adapt workplaces, workstations and tools to the worker to ensure the work each worker performs recognizes their physical limits and ensures they are not exceeded to the point of injury; and

Whereas the negotiation of ergonomics language into collective agreements offers insufficient protection of workers against repetitive strain injuries; and

Whereas the incorporation of ergonomics into occupational health and safety legislation and a Canada-wide standard for ergonomics will make an effective difference in addressing this enormous social problem.

Therefore be it resolved that the Council of the Region of Niagara supports both a Canada-wide standard for ergonomics and the incorporation of ergonomics regulations into occupational health and safety legislation.

Carried.

HUMAN RESOURCES (continued)

28. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
2001/2002 Annual Report

Moved by Councillor Thomson
Seconded by Councillor Smeaton

That Report HR 18-2003, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 2001/2002 Annual Report, be received for information.

Carried.

ADMINISTRATION

29. Leadership Roundtable Program

Mr. Mike Trojan, CAO, provided an overview of Report CAO 7-2003. He noted that last year was the first time for this program in Niagara, and this year it has expanded and includes staff from the area municipalities.

Moved by Councillor Thomson
Seconded by Councillor Harry

That Report CAO 7-2003, Leadership Roundtable Program Report, be received for information

Carried.

HUMAN RESOURCES (continued)

30. Corporate Employee Recognition Team (CERT)
"Recognition of Excellence" Award Winners

Mr. Nicol, Commissioner Human Resources provided an overview of Report HR 15-2003. The Committee extended congratulations to the recipients.

Moved by Councillor Thomson
Seconded by Councillor Saracino

That Report HR 15-2003 – Corporate Employee Recognition Team (CERT)
“Recognition of Excellence” Award Winners, be received for information.
Carried.

31. 2002 Corporate Health Services – Annual Report

Mr. Nicol, Commissioner Human Resources, introduced Lora Fontana, Director of Corporate Health Services and Employee Relations, Dan Miron, Corporate Health Services Manager, and Tricia Clausen, Corporate Health and Safety Co-ordinator, who collaborated on the preparation of Report HR 16-2003 with Mairi Birr, WSIB Claims Analyst, and the Corporation’s Occupational Health Nurses. Mr. Nicol advised that the report covers the full gamut of lost time in one report, and updates Council on indicators of performance and program highlights respecting Corporate disability management programs and health and safety for the 2002 calendar year. It also includes strategies which will be continued into 2003

Moved by Councillor Harry
Seconded by Councillor Bailey

That Report HR 16-2003 – 2002 Corporate Health Services – Annual Report, encompassing health and safety, paid sick leave, WSIB management and related disability management programs, be received for information.
Carried.

32. Regional Municipality of Niagara and
Buffett Taylor & Associates Ltd.
“Corporate Wellness Program” Annual Report

Mr. Nicol, Commissioner Human Resources provided an overview of Report HR 17-2003. He advised that the report updates Council on the success of the final year of a three-year Corporate wellness initiative with Buffett Taylor and Associates Ltd., and outlines the transition to a new wellness program co-ordination model co-facilitated by the Human Resources and Public Health Departments.

Moved by Councillor Thomson
Seconded by Councillor Smeaton

That Report HR 17-2003 – Regional Municipality of Niagara and Buffett Taylor & Associates Ltd. “Corporate Wellness Program” Annual Report, be received for information.

Carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

33. **Staff Complement**

Councillor Saracino requested an updated report with respect to staff composition, by department, over the past few years.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 11:10 a.m. to meet again on Tuesday, May 13, 9:30 a.m., Committee Room #4, Regional Headquarters.

Rob Nicholson
Chair

Pam Gilroy
Deputy Regional Clerk

Thomas R. Hollick
Regional Clerk