

SICTA Questions Sea Isle Salaries

By JOE HART

SEA ISLE CITY — Tom Henry, president of the Sea Isle City Taxpayers Association (SICTA), wanted some questions answered about the new ordinance fixing wages for city employees.

At the Dec. 26 meeting, Henry pointed out that in the eight-page document the city lists 209 job titles. He said of those titles, 72 are high-salaried administrative or supervisory positions and there are currently 140 full-time city employees.

"The ratio of administrators to workers is very high," he said.

Henry took issue with the highly paid supervisors and managers also receiving overtime pay. He suggested that administrators should be salaried and not eligible for extra pay for longer hours.

Mayor Leonard Desiderio asked Henry for an example of an administrator who received overtime pay. Henry replied with a few titles from the ordinance's list, including assistant supervisor of traffic maintenance.

"Nobody in the traffic department is getting overtime," Desiderio said.

Henry said he was less concerned with the fact that work conditions at the present do not warrant extra work hours, but more that supervisory employees are eligible for overtime pay.

In another specific reference, Henry asked why the

position of business administrator on the job title list had a salary of between \$50,000 and \$110,000.

He recalled from a previous meeting that commissioners had fixed the salary for the position at \$80,000.

Desiderio agreed on the figure, saying the numbers on the list are only a range and the agreed upon salary will be used when a business administrator is hired.

Desiderio said the commissioners would look into taxpayers' concerns and get back to Henry at a future meeting.

"The salary ordinance doesn't make sense," Henry concluded. He urged the commissioners not to adopt it.

In other action, commissioners authorized Desiderio and City Clerk Theresa Tighe to sign union contracts with CWA Local 1044 representing the city's clerical and public works employees.

Henry asked if SICTA would be able to review the contracts prior to signing as per its previous request.

Desiderio consulted with Paul Baldini, city solicitor, before replying that copies will be furnished for SICTA, but there would be no time for review before authorization.

Henry also brought up concerns SICTA had regarding the recent arrest of a Sea Isle police sergeant accused of falsifying evidence and official misconduct.

Realizing the commis-

sioners would not be able to comment on this pending investigation, he said his questions dealt with the city's hiring and retention process of the officer and not with the ongoing case.

Henry asked:

- Whether any special "quid pro quo" agreement was made with West Cape May when the city hired the officer after leaving there?

- If his personnel file included the recommendation "do not hire?"

- If he had received negative evaluations, why did the city retain him?

Baldini advised commissioners not to discuss the officer at a public meeting.

He said the accused had rights and he was not comfortable with any discussion on the subject.

However, Commissioner James Iannone, who heads the public safety department, said of the supposed "quid pro quo" agreement, "I'm in charge of hiring there, and that didn't happen."

Contact Hart at (609) 886-8600 Ext 35 or at: jhart@cmcherald.com

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