

**MINUTES OF THE
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP OF THE
TOWN OF PINEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2012**

The Town Council of the Town of Pineville met in special session on Thursday, January 19, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the Pineville Police Department located at 427 Main St., Pineville, NC.

ATTENDANCE

Mayor: Mayor George Fowler
Mayor Pro-Tem: David Phillips
Town Council Members: Debbie Fowler, Les Gladden and Melissa Davis
Town Administrator: Mike Rose
Human Resources: Tihisha Sharif
Town Clerk: Barbara Monticello

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fowler called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. and stated that an Executive Session would follow immediately after the workshop.

I. COMPENSATION STUDY/PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Town Administrator, Mike Rose, stated that Tihisha Sharif of Human Resources was in attendance to make a presentation regarding a compensation study and the evaluation process which she had worked on for the past month. Ms. Sharif handed out a copy of the presentation to each Council Member and stated the overall goal was to revamp the compensation package. She added that the reason for the study was because the current compensation plan was a Step and Grade System plan which was not allowing for raises based on performance of the employee. The Step and Grade System had not been updated in 15 years, did not allow for any flexibility and based salaries on budget rather than Market Value for the position.

The study was done by surveying neighboring municipalities including: Huntersville, Mint Hill, Waxhaw, Davidson, Matthews and Cornelius. New salary ranges were established based on the data provided with an average market value determined for similar jobs. When an employee reaches the top of the salary range, they may be given a bonus which still rewards them but limits the payroll taxes and retirement payments. Ms. Sharif also explained that most positions within the town were on target with the market with the exception of five positions which were significantly lower including: Town Clerk, Accounting Specialist, Planning Director, Planner, Human Resources Analyst/Director.

Ms. Sharif noted that an important part of any job were the benefits and those were also evaluated but determined to be in alignment with other municipalities. There may be some things that Pineville offers that are better than most towns and some things that are not as good, but overall, it was in line with other towns. There were questions, concerns and comments from Council Members. Mayor Fowler was concerned about the salaries of a couple of employees that were making more money than what they should be, while Council Member Davis wanted to

know if education was a factor in all of this. Mr. Rose stated that several components all played a part in the process in some way including education and length of service, but that the town needed to establish some sort of a baseline and go from there.

Mayor Fowler added he wanted to ensure accountability from Department Heads as well as a system that would be motivational for employees. Ms. Sharif agreed but explained that before a person can be hired and subsequently evaluated there must be a job description in place. She had worked on making sure there was one for every position and they were now all completed so annual evaluations could now take place.

Council Member, Les Gladden, stated that an annual review was not enough and should be done at least quarterly and that Department Heads should be giving their employees feedback on a quarterly basis and keeping a diary on each employee. Ms. Sharif stated that not all the evaluations would be done at the same time but proposed they be done on the anniversary date so that any one Department Head would not have so many to do at one time. Six-month probationary evaluations were already being done and she was sending out reminders to any Department Heads when one was due. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips wanted to be sure it wasn't just a column of checkmarks that a Department Head would mark off but wanted to be sure that specific examples were cited. She assured him that it would be required to provide specific examples.

Tihisha Sharif remarked that she had planned two training workshops for Department Heads: one for training on doing the evaluation and the other to handle conflict and resolution. She added that since none of this had been done in the past, it would take time to get everyone on board and moving forward with the process. Mayor Fowler was still not clear on how to get everyone to buy into "raising the boat" – to instill upon the Department Heads that organization, goals and evaluations go hand-in-hand. He was looking for a way to see tangible evidence in one year's time because Council had a vested interest in Department Heads.

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips asked if July would be the earliest the new evaluation process would start and if benefits would be taken into consideration along with the employee's salary. Ms. Sharif replied that the new process would begin July 1st and for about the first year and a half, there probably would be some slack given until everyone was fully on board with the process. Council Member Fowler asked if it had to be adopted or was just being rolled out as of July 1st to which Mayor Fowler replied it was being rolled out in July and that Council should meet again with Ms. Sharif in October to see how the process was going. For now they directed her to start the training sessions.

Discussion continued regarding the need to have a separate step plan for Public Safety to which Ms. Sharif noted there were inconsistencies within the Police Department and in order to be competitive with Charlotte, the minimum pay would need to be increased. Council Member Gladden suggested doing a one-time adjustment to bring everyone into alignment. The concern was that once the new compensation system was put in place that the town might wind up paying out more than what they had in the past and Council needed to feel comfortable that the proper percentages were being awarded to those that deserved it. Council also expressed the need to be more aggressive by doing spot checks on personnel files and given the ability to read supervisor's comments. Ms. Sharif stated that her role was to work for Council but also to be an advocate for employees and to protect the town so that it does not put itself at risk by doing this.

Ms. Sharif recommended treating those positions that were below the minimum as a priority and to get them raised to the value of the position first. Mayor Fowler stated that we were always gauging ourselves against someone else to determine what works best for us. Where we were in the market did not mean we should automatically raise salaries and what about those whose salaries were above the market; would that mean we would bring their salaries down. Ms. Sharif asked the Mayor to keep in mind the “value of the job” and what that job was worth, not the person in the job. She also reminded him that employees do know the “value of their jobs”. Everyone going forward would be paid based on their performance but the worth of that job must be taken into consideration first. Mr. Rose stated the consensus of Council was to start the training process for evaluations, documentation and conflict management and that he would come back to Council with an adoptable plan that would tie into the budgeting process.

II. TELEPHONE POLICY

Mayor Fowler began the discussion explaining that Pineville Telephone Company was shifting to a revenue-focused entity of the town that will be operating as a profit/loss company. Since they’ve decided to move in the direction to sell IPTV services to generate some cash flow, they would be subject to even more scrutiny and regulation by the Utilities Commission so it was important to establish a policy which determines who is entitled to what services.

The Telephone Board was discussed including who is currently on that board, the length of their terms, what function it served and how often they met. Mayor Fowler clarified that it was developed because of issues in the past with Rain Tree and deciding who should be served by Pineville Telephone. The board was formed so it could meet annually to discuss any problems they were having but it was never a legal, functioning entity because the Town of Pineville shows as the owner on every legal document. The Town Council does serve as part of the Telephone Board along with Kenny Mills, Jack Crump and Holt Earnhardt.

Mayor Fowler expressed the need to establish a policy that would spell out exactly who would be entitled to what services at no cost to them. Town Administrator, Mike Rose, reviewed with Council, a list of past and present employees, board members and Council Members and the services they are receiving from the town free of charge. After some discussion, it was decided that the following policy would be put in place, effective immediately:

- Current Council Members are permitted one basic phone line of service from Pineville Telephone for free.
- Current Telephone Board Members are permitted one basic phone line of service from Pineville Telephone for free.
- Testing of the IPTV full range of channels and benefits is for a limited time only and ends once the testing of the product and service has officially ended.
- Current Council Members only can receive the basic cable service and up to three (3) boxes free of charge. Any other tier of service or extra boxes would be the responsibility of the individual to pay for.
- Current Council Members and the Telephone Board Members only can have one line of the DSL service free of charge depending on what Department Head, Gary Creech, suggests would be appropriate. Mike Rose to follow-up with Gary Creech on this item.

Council also stated that the following individuals were no longer entitled to free cell phone service: Libby and Don Boatwright, Jack Thrower and Mary Ann Creech. Once a Council Member is no longer serving on the board or an employee is no longer working for the town, their cell phones must be turned in. David Phillips moved to approve the new Telephone, DSL and Cable policy effective immediately with Debbie Fowler seconding the motion. There were ayes by all. The Clerk and Town Administrator were excused. The Regular Session of the meeting ended at 9:35 after which a motion was made and seconded to enter into Executive Session.

ATTEST:


Barbara Monticello, Town Clerk


George C. Fowler, Mayor

**EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES FOR THE
PINEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF
JANUARY 19, 2012**

Clerk was not in attendance. Minutes have not been made available at this time.