



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor Prussing  
Members, Urbana City Council

**FROM:** Bruce Walden, CAO  
Mona Shannon, Personnel Manager

**DATE:** August 16, 2005

**RE:** Employee Retention and Recruitment

### Background:

In response to Council direction, staff identified several issues negatively impacting employee retention and recruitment. While there are many factors affecting retention and recruitment, including salary and benefits, staff started with the obvious low cost and no cost improvements that could be implemented in a timely manor. Our previous memo outlined the problems with the present system and offered potential changes in the system.

### Council Work to Date

During the last discussion of this matter on July 25, 2005, there appeared to be general agreement on several points with additional details to be worked out in study session. They are as follows:

1. *Reduce the number of employees on the annual political appointment list.* There was discussion of including the Chief Administrative Officer, Department Heads, Assistant Police Chief and Fire Division Chiefs.

**Discussion point:** Are there other positions that should be annually appointed?

2. ***Provide employment agreements to those on the political appointment list. A draft agreement was presented. There was discussion regarding the minimum notice period for termination for terminations unrelated to performance.***

**Discussion point: What is the minimum and maximum notice period that should be provided for termination unrelated to performance?**

3. ***Provide for a longer “initial” appointment for new employees. There seemed to be consensus on the language presented.***

**Additionally, Council members requested information comparing and contrasting the Civil Service System with the political appointee system. This comparison is attached.**

### **Action Plan**

**Once the appointment list is agreed upon, a civil service amendment will be drafted to add the non-appointed employees to the Civil Service System. Once the notice period is agreed upon employment agreements will be prepared for approval of those remaining on the appointment list and to be offered the new police chief and city attorney. Any additional cleanup to the city code will follow.**

**BKW:ss**

**Mayoral Appointment vs. Civil Service Appointment**

<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Both</b>	<b>Civil Service</b>
<p>Subject to State law and City Ordinance regarding municipal appointments. The statute permits appointments to be made by the Mayor with the City Council's approval, but does not <b>require</b> any advertising, announcing criteria, responding to candidates, etc. City Code may preempt State laws in some cases, but some powers are not subject to home rule, others require research.</p>	<p>Subject to all federal, state, and Urbana EEO laws. In practice, the City has historically followed merit principles and many civil service practices for most appointments. The City's Civil Service Code and rules provide for significant flexibility. Although the state statutes governing these two processes appear very different, the City's recruitment process under these systems are very similar.</p>	<p>Subject to State Civil Service statute, City Code 2-99, and Civil Service Rules. There are very few limits on home rule authority. Division Managers may be added to civil service through an ordinance, without an exam process. New hires would be examined. Testing includes advertising, establishing selection criteria, and announcing due dates. All applications are reviewed and all applicants receive a response. Urbana's rules emphasize that the process must be consistent for any given exam, but they permit significant variation between the procedures used for different jobs. A few revisions of the rules would help to ensure appropriate staffing procedures for Division Managers.</p>

**Typical Div. Mgr. hiring process**

**Differences under Civil Service**

<p>Department Head (DH) works with CAO and Mayor on organizational goals and needs. DH and the Personnel Manager, with approval of the CAO, jointly update the job description and develop the selection plan (criteria, advertising plan, application form, etc). The job is posted extensively. Candidates may be screened by DH, Personnel, or both. Internal and external candidates compete simultaneously. Top candidates (based on the criteria) are interviewed by a panel. DH and/or Personnel check references and background. DH recommends candidate to the CAO. The CAO and Mayor may interview or meet the final candidate before council appointment. The CAO recommends a candidate to the Mayor and the City Council approves.</p>	<p>Under both systems, the DH, CAO, and Personnel Manager work together to identify top candidates for interviews. The DH is <b>not</b> required to interview all "certified candidates". Legal decisions must be documented under both systems. However, political appointments can be made for any non-discriminatory reason, whereas civil service appointments must be based on merit and operational needs.</p>	<p>Changes in the job description must be approved by the Commission. The selection criteria and plan become an "exam". Screening must be somewhat more formal. Resumes or applications must be scored by some method, e.g. pass/fail, in tiers, or by numerical score. The Personnel Manager/DH would recommend a cutoff score or pass/fail criteria to a commissioner. Approval must be obtained before proceeding. Scoring is a little more cumbersome than screening that is typical of appointments. All candidates that pass (up to 30 or more) are "certified" to the DH for "consideration". Candidates must be notified that they passed or did not pass (met qualifications). Unless the Commission voids the register or strikes names, a "register" of eligible candidates will be maintained. The City can hire from the register multiple times, with or without readvertising. Selections would be made by the DH, with the approval of the CAO. The Mayor may review selections at her option.</p>
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<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Both</b>	<b>Civil Service</b>
Discipline and Discharge	Discipline and Discharge	Discipline and Discharge
<p>Appointments are limited by statute to the term of the Mayor and by City Code to the fiscal year. Appointees may be discharged by the Mayor, subject to reinstatement by the Council. Appointees are subject to annual reappointment by the Mayor, with approval of the Council. Non-reappointment does not require any justification or cause.</p>	<p>Discipline, discharge, and non-reappointment are subject to federal, state, and Urbana EEO laws.</p>	<p>New hires serve a probation during which they must be reviewed and can be fired if they do not meet requirements. The length of probation varies based on position from 6 months to 18 months. Staff recommends a one-year or more probation for all Division Managers and exempt employees. Following probation, employees may only be discharged for just cause or due to layoffs (reorganization). Progressive steps are required for all but serious offenses.</p>