

**VILLAGE OF SHOREWOOD HILLS**  
**Personnel Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes - DRAFT**

**Thursday, April 11, 2024 – 9:30 am**

Location: Zoom Only

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Shabnam Lotfi called the meeting to order at 9:31 am.
2. **Roll Call:**  
Members Present: Chair Shabnam Lotfi, Cokie Albrecht, Mary Gulbrandsen, Greg Lampe, and Erica Moeser  
Members Absent: Laura Stephenson (excused)  
Also in Attendance: Administrator Sharon Eveland, Clerk-Treasurer Julie Fitzgerald, Police Chief Jeff Pharo and Police Lieutenant Jaime Weitzel
3. **Note compliance with open meetings law:** Fitzgerald confirmed that the meeting was properly noticed.
4. **Discussion/Possible Action Regarding Retention and New-Hire Incentives for Sworn Officers:**  
Lotfi started the discussion by advising the committee that we have had two officers leave recently and one left specifically because of pay. She would like the committee to consider recommending issuing current officers a \$3,000 retention bonus for 2024. Police Chief Pharo reviewed a wage comparison spreadsheet showing that the Village is at the low-end for both new-hire wages and even more so for experienced officer pay. He informed the committee that they are having a very difficult time getting qualified applicants for open positions. He explained to the committee what some other communities are doing with wages and benefits to aid in hiring and retaining staff. Explained that besides wage issues, SHPD offers limited opportunities for advancement and there is concern over job security with Board discussions of eliminating the PD. Pharo also explained that because of our limited staffing, if is necessary to hire officers with experience because they require minimal training and are able to work independently. Lieutenant Weitzel told the committee that ideally, we would like to offer a \$3-\$4 pay raise in lieu of bonuses.  
The committee agreed that the Village as a whole greatly respects and appreciates the police department and they would like to address these issues to make hiring and retention of officers easier.  
Eveland explained that pay raises are not really an option at the moment. Because of state-mandated levy limits, the only way to be able to budget for raises would be to cut a position. We can afford to do the bonuses this year due to cost-savings from having empty positions for part of the year. She went on to explain to the committee that because Shorewood Hills has no growth from new construction like many of the other nearby communities, the levy limit is not allowed to be increased without another referendum. The committee agreed that the retention and recruiting of new staff is a crisis that needs to be addressed ASAP.  
**M/S Gulbrandsen/Moeser to give a \$5,000 retention bonus to all current police officers and a recommendation to the Board to immediately have a subcommittee address this issue. Motion carried.**

5. **Next Meeting Date:** May 2, 2024 – 6:30 pm
6. **Adjourn:**  
**M/S Lotfi/Gulbrandsen to adjourn. Motion carried.**  
Personnel Committee adjourned at 10:16 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Julie Fitzgerald*  
*Village Clerk-Treasurer*

DRAFT

**Notes to the Personnel Committee June 4, 2024**

**Consider adjustment to Pool Manager salary due to Federal FLSA rule changes defining and delimiting the exemptions for Executive, Administrative, Professional, Outside Sales and Computer Employees** – The U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division

announced the above final rule that will take effect on July 1, 2024, that set the minimum salary that requires exempt employees to be paid time and one half for hours in excess of forty per week. That threshold is \$43,888 per year, \$21.10 per hour. It will increase to \$58,656, \$28.20 per hour on January 1, 2025.

DATE	STANDARD SALARY LEVEL	HIGHLY COMPENSATED EMPLOYEE TOTAL ANNUAL COMPENSATION THRESHOLD
Before July 1, 2024	\$684 per week (equivalent to \$35,568 per year)	\$107,432 per year, including at least \$684 per week paid on a salary or fee basis.
July 1, 2024	\$844 per week (equivalent to \$43,888 per year)	\$132,964 per year, including at least \$844 per week paid on a salary or fee basis.
January 1, 2025	\$1,128 per week (equivalent to \$58,656 per year)	\$151,164 per year, including at least \$1,128 per week paid on a salary or fee basis.
July 1, 2027, and every 3 years thereafter	To be determined by applying to available data the methodology used to set the salary level in effect at the time of the update.	To be determined by applying to available data the methodology used to set the salary level in effect at the time of the update.

The Village has one staff member that is impacted by the rule. The Pool Manager is paid \$41,600 per year, \$20.00 per hour. During the months of May, June, July, and August it is highly likely that the Pool Manager will work in excess of forty hours per week – probably in the range of fifty hours on average. The last few weeks have at least been in the fifty-hour range.

The difference between the Pool Manger salary and the minimum threshold is \$2,288. If the manager works 10 hours of overtime per week in June, July, and August (12 weeks) that will be \$3,600. If ten weeks, \$3,000.

It may make sense to adjust the salary above the \$43,888 threshold rather than having to manually adjust payroll each pay period and also have the manager have to track time. This employee takes phone calls, emails, texts, and alarms at all hours of the day whether it be from the staff or pool members and tracking time will be somewhat difficult. It is also possible that paying the manager overtime will cost the Village more. A call or text may be five minutes, or it may be more depending. There are also times that the employee may need to come to work due to the nature of the issue.

Given the major management responsibilities of this job it is also paid quite low in comparison to staff in the grid step system, although there are also light workload periods of the year that to some degree compensates for this. If the pay is increased there should be some thought to what is fair in recognition of the fact that they will not be eligible for overtime.

$$\$45,760 = \$22.00 \text{ hour} \quad / \quad \$45,000 = \$21.64 \quad / \quad \$43,888 = \$21.00$$

**Update and actions if needed regarding resignation and ensuing recruitment of Parks Forestry /Horticulturist Manager** – The Forester has resigned effective June 6. An exit interview will take place and a form to complete asking about likes, dislikes and ways to improve has been provided also. The Assistant Forester will assume a larger role and the PW Department will also be able to assist in the interim, as well as seasonal help. Meetings with the outgoing Forester, the Assistant and DPW Superintendent will take place. The job has not yet been advertised, nor is the process to recommend the hire.

**Update and actions if needed regarding recruitment of DPW Crew Member** – The job has been posted with a June 30 priority deadline for applications, although it is posted as until filled. The job is posted on Indeed, The State of WI Job Center, Urban League, and League of WI Municipalities website. We have 34 applications thus far.

**Update on status of Police Department staffing** – The Village is now one short on patrol from being three down, we were able attract and promote a part-time officer who was full-time in Baraboo to full-time here and a former officer also came back.

**Update on Administrator search** - The Board will do four final interviews Saturday and may have made a selection and be negotiating terms by our meeting. There were fifteen applicants.

Finalists will have toured the Village, met with staff, engaged in a resident meet and greet, had lunch with the Village President and Interim Administrator, taken an emotional intelligence test and a completed a written exercise in addition to the final interview.

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Here are some suggestions that Adam Lohmann made for the new Forester job posting:

1. More emphasis on “urban forestry” vs. “parks” as a general description of the position. Include the concept of conservation as a value of the Village.
2. Experience. More emphasis on:
  - a. Tree & other plant species ID skills
  - b. Ecological restoration training / experience
  - c. Knowledge or experience with integrated pest management (IPM)
3. Mention the weed commissioner role as one of the duties of the Forester

The Village of Shorewood Hills (population 2376) is seeking applicants for the position of Village Forester/Horticulturist. Shorewood Hills is a highly desirable community that is an inner ring suburb of Madison, Wisconsin's capital city. Shorewood Hills is a welcoming and inclusive full-service community that prides itself on being a wonderful place to live, work, play, learn, and visit. The Forester/Horticulturist is responsible for managing the community forests, parks, public gardens, and other green space. The position performs administrative and technical work and is responsible for regulating, overseeing, and conducting the planting, removal, maintenance, and protection of trees, shrubs, and other plants in or upon all public areas of the Village. The Village established this position because it recognized the value of trees and their significance as an environmental, economic, and community asset.

Requirements include a Bachelor's Degree in Urban Forestry or related field from an accredited college and three years of technical work experience directly related to urban forestry and horticulture/landscaping. Supervisory experience is preferred but not required. Certification by the International Society of Arboriculture as a Certified Arborist is strongly preferred and will be considered favorably during the hiring process. This position requires the ability to work independently and the skills to work well with the general public and other community partners. Some evening and weekend work is required. This is an hourly, non-exempt position and the starting wage rate will be \$23.56-\$30.30 DOQ. To apply, please send a cover letter, resume, and at least five work-related references to Village Administrator Sharon Eveland at [seveland@shorewood-hills.org](mailto:seveland@shorewood-hills.org). The position is open until filled, however, application materials must be received by February 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm for first consideration.

As an employer, we strive to provide a work environment where diversity and differing opinions are valued, creativity is encouraged, continuous learning and improvement are fostered, teamwork and open/honest communication are encouraged, and meeting customer needs through quality service is a shared goal. Applicants from traditionally underrepresented populations including women, racial and ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities are especially encouraged to apply.

## Forester Interview Questions

1. Tell us about yourself.
2. Why are you interested in this position?
3. What is most important to you in a role or work environment?
4. What are your strengths regarding urban forestry?
5. If you could take any continued education in forestry, what would be your focus and why?
6. Describe how your past employment has prepared you for this position.

7. What do you see as the pros and cons of dense forest canopy within a residential area and what type of maintenance and care do you believe is needed in a natural area within a residential community?
  
8. How does wildlife impact your decision process in urban forestry and parkland?
  
9. Please describe the advantages and disadvantages of native species in an urban ecosystem as well as your experience in invasive species control and native plant restoration.
  
10. What is your experience with tree diagnostics, tree climbing and maintenance, and tree database management?
  
11. Please detail your experience with administrative functions related to this position such as developing community forestry plans, grant writing, budget development, and the interviewing/hiring of seasonal staff.



12. What do you anticipate will be the biggest challenges you would face as the forester in Shorewood Hills?
  
13. What is your experience collaborating with residents, community organizations, and volunteers?
  
14. This position has extensive direct engagement with the public and is expected to treat members of the public respectfully and tactfully. Please describe in detail a situation where you have diffused a high stress situation with a member of the public or a customer.
  
15. This position is expected to complete the tasks of the position with autonomy and minimal oversight. Please describe in detail your experience working independently while being personally responsible for major functions of forestry and horticulture.
  
16. Why are you looking to leave your current employment?

17. Have you ever been terminated or asked to resign from a position? If so, please describe the situation in detail.

18. This position's normal working hours will be 7am-4pm Monday through Thursday and 7am-11am on Fridays. This schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the Village. Additionally, there will be at least two monthly evening meetings you would be required to attend and other situations on occasion where overtime is necessary. Are you comfortable with this schedule and commitment?

19. This position is an emergency response position and, as such, the individual filling it will be required to live within a 30-minute response time within six months of hire. Are you willing and able to meet that requirement?

20. Do you have any questions for us?